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HAGAR

BY

JAMES ARTHUR MACKNIGHT

"Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung."



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DEDICATED TO

MY FRIEND

MISS LAURA DAINTREY,

WHO ENCOURAGED THE AUTHOR IN A DARK HOUR, AND AIDED HIM IN EDITING THE MANUSCRIPT.

THE AUTHOR.

HAGAR.

CHAPTER I.

"The negligence, the apathy, the evils
Of sensual sloth, produce ten thousand tyrants."
—*Byron.*

Ohio was among the first and most valiant of the sisterhood of loyal States in sending her sons as a free sacrifice to the fields of strife when treason and rebellion threatened the life of the nation. And, though she was already deeply stricken by her losses at Shiloh, Donelson, and on the battle-grounds of Virginia, the shadow of bereavement had not yet settled on her fair face, for the swath that was marked in the plans of fate had not yet been cut through her serried ranks.

The fumes, the din, the horror, and the desolation of battle, had happily been kept far from her. She had experienced the anguish that evil tidings bring; the alarm born of rumor—but these had only strengthened her in the stern and prayerful determination that the Union must prevail.

The customary life of the more northerly cities and towns of the state had been but little altered by the progress of the war, but the country was already becoming stripped of its young men to such an extent that in some places the ripe crops had not been harvested and many homesteads seemed deserted.

At Cleveland and in the surrounding country the weather was bright and balmy. In the city there were unwonted life and activity. Mad speculation, political rancor, war preparation, and social frivolity, each drew to itself its legion of devotees; but nearly all these in due time brought their tributes to the altar of Patriot-

ism; and Morality, which, like other blessings of freedom, is ever assailed by war, was not dethroned.

Along the country road near Cleveland on a pleasant Sunday afternoon in the autumn of 1862, the forest and fruit trees in their sombre tints, swayed in the wind, and their leaves were beginning to fall like tears they shed for the departing summer. Birds were flitting about noisily in the apple trees, on which some of the winter varieties still hung; the merry little songsters fluttered and whirred around in coveys, chirping loudly as if busy with their preparations for migration to the Southern lands.

This section of the road was a narrow turnpiked lane, and for the space of more than a mile there were no houses near it. The fields on each side were covered with the stubble of cereals, while here and there were long rows of corn shocks, and golden sheaves of wheat still standing on the ground awaiting laborers. It was one of the best roads leading to Cleveland from the Elyria toll road, and like others which crossed it at regular intervals, was closely fenced, and shaded by rows of well-grown poplars and cotton woods. There was but little traffic along those roads on Sundays, and even more than the customary quiet of Sunday in the country seemed to prevail there to-day.

A young man on foot, shabbily dressed, was the only visible traveller. In his right hand he carried a staff which seemed suited either for walking or for defence, and in his left a gaunt looking carpet bag. Though he seemed weary, he held on his way with head erect and with a resolute expression. There was something interesting about his appearance. From his innocence of beard he might have been taken for a youth of seventeen or eighteen, but his serious features and the expression of his dark eyes suggested more years.

He paused to drink at a clear brook under the shade of some tall cotton-woods, and then, after glancing up and down the road to assure himself that no one was coming, sat down on the grassy bank and began bathing his tired feet in the stream. Hardly a minute passed before he was startled by the voice of a woman crying piteously for "help!" It sounded close by as if in one of the ad-

joining fields, but it was suddenly hushed and he had nothing to guide him towards what he thought must be a fellow-creature in distress. He was disturbed, for, though he made no pretentions to knight-errantry, that piercing scream had thrilled him as he had never before been thrilled. Barefooted as he was he grasped his staff and ran to the first cross-lane. He at first saw nothing suspicious, and was about to turn back when he caught sight of something moving between the trees of a hedge-row in the lane, and ran with all speed in that direction. Of a sudden he came upon a burly-looking man with full black beard dragging a young woman through the bushes with his hand clasped over her mouth. His brain reeled at the thought that a murder was about to be committed before his eyes; but his heart was strong, and he plunged through the thicket. The ruffian, finding himself pursued, flushed with rage and nearly dropped his burden, but seeing that the stripling was so much his inferior in physical power, he gritted his teeth and exclaimed with an oath,

"Go your way, boy, or I'll murder you!"

The girl was gasping for breath, and struggling with the energy of despair by which she disengaged his hand for an instant and shrieked in terror. At this the young man sprang forward, his bare feet lacerated by the briars and stubble, and dealt her assailant a blow with his staff. The stroke must have been weakened by the pain he was suffering, for the man warded it off as if it had been a rush. He let go his hold on his captive, and sprang upon the young man like a tiger, crushing him to the earth. The girl staggered a moment, being almost suffocated with fright; but seeing her defender in imminent danger she seized the staff he had let fall, and, unseen by either of the combatants who were clutched in a death struggle, dealt the man such a well-directed and nervous blow across the back of the head that he rolled over and quivered as if he had been shot. The traveller saw what she had done as he sprang to his feet but little hurt: she dropped the staff and was sinking to the ground when he ran to support her. He raised her to her feet and as the tears came to her relief, she gasped:

"Oh! take me home, take me home! I feel that I shall die!"

"No you shan't, Miss. Come, I'll take you home and you shan't die. You are quite safe now, so don't be afraid." As he spoke he stooped over his prostrate enemy and took from under his coat a sharp dagger in a leather sheath. The blade was about eight inches long and in the struggle the ruffian had partly drawn it from the scabbard. There were two letters roughly cut on the bone handle, and the traveller put it into his pocket as a trophy of his first battle. He then urged the young girl to summon up her strength as the man on the ground began to show signs of life. She was anxious enough to be gone, but for some moments was afflicted with a kind of paralysis like that experienced in dreams.

The delay seemed long and dangerous to the young man, though in fact it only amounted to a few seconds, and he was glad to find his way back to the road with the maiden he had rescued walking by his side. Great was his satisfaction that the enemy did not reappear.

He knew by the description she gave that he had passed her home perhaps three-quarters of a mile to the westward, and he hurriedly put on his shoes to accompany her thither. When she had partly recovered from her fright she related the circumstances of the attack. She had gone into town with her father in the morning to attend church, and as he was detained for a special meeting in the evening she thought she would walk home alone as she had often done. She first noticed the man who had assaulted her soon after passing through the suburbs of the city, but had anticipated no danger, and continued on her way. The man must have followed her by another road, for she had not seen him again until he came towards her suddenly from the lane where she was rescued. This was all, she said, except that it was evident to her that Heaven had sent the traveller to save her at a moment when she felt that she was lost.

"Perhaps so," he said, dryly, as he looked back in the direction of his enemy, and wondered whether the law would ever punish him as he deserved. "I must try to find that villian and put justice on his track," he added presently. The difficulty of realizing his wish fully presented itself to his mind, and he walked on in silence until they came in sight of a large and handsomely

built house on the left side of the road, situated in a grove of chestnuts and fruit trees. An avenue of poplars extended from the gate to the house, and on both sides were wide closely-mown lawns cut into a garden landscape of flower-beds, shubbery and evergreens.

The traveller had already guessed from the manner and the attire of his protegee, that she belonged to a good family, and now he gazed with deepened interest at the pleasant home he had passed with indifference a short time before.

He opened the gate for her and she entered, but he remained outside. She was visibly embarrassed, and stammered as she said:—

"Will you not come in and rest?"

"No, thank you," he replied, closing the gate and stepping back—"I must hurry into the city."

"My father is the Rev. Dr. Taine—I would urge you to come in now if he were here to thank you. But when he is away I have no friends here—you will pardon me?——"

"Don't apologize, Miss—its all right. I should refuse to come in now in any case—I shall be late. But I may see you and your friends at another time. As to what I've done for you I don't want any thanks; I'm glad I've had the honor to be of service to you, though sorry enough for your suffering. And now I must bid you good day."

Their eyes met, his full of serious candor, her's expressing a wistful embarrassment, as he raised his hat in salute and resumed his walk towards Cleveland.

The young girl's lips moved as though she were trying to speak, but without uttering a word she pressed her handkerchief to her eyes and went slowly up the avenue.

Before she reached the house Mrs. Taine appeared on the verandah and called to her. This was an elderly woman with thin features, and a sharp pair of cat-like eyes staring out of gold-rimmed spectacles. She was annoyed that Hagar did not answer, and called to her again with spiteful emphasis.

"Answer me at once, Miss! What's the meaning of this? Who was that man at my gate with you?"

"Oh! Mrs. Taine"—said the young girl faintly between her sobs as she threw herself despondently on the verandah steps.

In a moment Mrs. Taine had imagined a drama of youthful indiscretion and folly. Here was proof positive, of what she had long suspected, that Hagar was a forward young woman and a flirt.

"Don't call me "Mrs." hussy! how dare you call me "Mrs." she exclaimed with energy. This verbal slip on the part of Hagar was another proof as strong as holy writ that it was Mrs. Taine's duty to corner her there and then. She had recently got a notion, nobody knew how or where, that "Madam" sounded more dignified than "Mrs." and insisted on that title in its abbreviated form, from those who were beholden to her.

"Come," said she, taking hold of Hagar's arm—"out with it—who was it—for I declare he looked like a pedlar from my window.

"He was an entire stranger, Ma'am Taine"——

"Oh! my gracious! another blackguard acquaintance ey! What next, I wonder!"

"I had a dreadful fright—a man attacked"—she was anxious to hit upon an explanation of an incident which she felt it would be difficult to account for to the satisfaction of her present audience; but Mrs. Taine interrupted her at every word.

"A fright! you don't say so! And were you so frightened that you didn't know better than to take up with a strange man, pray?"

"I would tell you what I mean in a few words if you would permit me," said Hagar in a voice which indicated both humility and fear. But Mrs. Taine wanted a confession in accord with her preconceived theory and strove to abase her victim by a storm of words, in the midst of which Hagar retreated to the sitting-room, whither the old lady promptly followed her.

Mrs. Taine settled herself in an easy chair near the grate and cast an inquisitorial glance at Hagar, who had taken a book from the table and was listlessly turning the leaves.

"I'm ready to hear what you've got to say Miss Romancer, but mind, I shall believe only as much of it as I like, for the girls of these days are given to fabricating yarns of a very different kind from those I spun at your age. I know your weakness, so do not think to impose on my credulity."

Hagar was silent, and kept her eyes bent upon her book, uncertain what to say. After a moment's pause she started to quit the room.

"Well, hussy, well? what's come over you? How dare you turn your back upon me and not reply. Such brazenness! But I know who to thank for all this. I knew by your nature and conduct as a child, what you would be when you thought yourself a woman—I told him so—Why don't you speak, I say!" The old lady spoke with such force and emphasis that her voice cracked ominously at the word "speak," and made several false notes before it recovered its wonted pitch.

Hagar turned round, and looking her calmly in the face, said:—

"If I had thought myself a woman, as you say Ma'am Taine, I should not have endured your tyranny as I have done so long. You must not suppose that I will make any statement whatever to you, when you declare your intention of disbelieving me even before I have spoken. I never told you a falsehood, though you have often accused me of so doing. Perhaps I have been the lamb too long, and I must tell you I shall cease to be so if I am treated like a wolf."

This display of independent spirit was a complete surprise to Mrs. Taine, as she had always been accustomed to seeing Hagar cower under the lash of her scorn.

"If you will excuse me," continued the young woman, "I will go to my room until Father Taine comes home." She withdrew quietly, leaving Mrs. Taine bewildered and very angry.

"Well, I never!" she exclaimed when Hagar had closed the door noiselessly. "Now she has gone to hatch a fine story for the ears of old Universality. What a position, to be sure, for a woman of my culture and antecedents."

She sat for awhile muttering to herself and rocking to and fro to lull her temper; then, taking up Calvins' "Institutes," which had long been her only source of religious instruction and mental recreation, she moved to a chair near the window that commanded a view of the avenue, and read intently until the daylight failed her. She had laid the good book on the window sill and was falling into a peaceful doze, when she heard a noise out-

side, and could just distinguish in the dusk that two vehicles were coming up the avenue.

"My goodness! what's this, I wonder?" She called Maria, and after throwing a woolen shawl over her head repaired to the verandah to see who the arrivals were. The foremost carriage was evidently Dr. Taines', and the other as certainly an ambulance.

"Now, I wonder if he's picked up some crippled beggar to trouble me with," she said, addressing the housemaid.

She was soon enlightened, for Dr. Taine, a venerable-looking man with white hair and beard, alighted from his buggy and directed the city ambulance to draw up to the steps, and she saw that the injured man who lay prone on the stretcher within was her husband's son.

"What's the matter, Nathan?" she asked.

"A serious accident has happened. The "Globe" office has been burned to the ground, and James is badly injured."

"Just what I expected!" exclaimed Mrs. Taine, raising her hands as if to call Heaven to witness the fulfilment of her prophecy. Though unable to restrain her desire to carp, she yet had enough consideration to lower her voice so it was only heard by the doctor. "You will now remember my words, Nathan, on the day the Misses Mull were here: 'Yes,' said I, 'all these young fellows would rather be in a crowded city where death and the devil are staring them in the face, than lead a steady and industrious life on the farm.' How often my words are verified, and yet how little they are heeded! I only wish—"

"Hush! Melissa," whispered the parson gently, "James may be dying."

Even so it would have delighted Mrs. Taine to remind him of her predictions, but the young men who had accompanied the patient were now bearing him towards the house. He was suffering acute pain and looked very pale.

James had not lived at his father's house for some time, and for a year or more had not passed a night there. There was, therefore, no chamber in readiness to receive him, and he was carried into the sitting-room to await necessary preparations. He was surprised to

find himself at Chestnut Grove, having supposed they were taking him to a hospital; but Dr. Taine preferred to have him brought home, and was advised to do so by the physician who examined his son's injuries.

CHAPTER II.

"She cannot love
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endeared."—*Shakspeare.*

The Rev. Nathan Taine was one of the leading apostles of Universalism in the West and had a large and influential following at Cleveland. His early life had been characterized by struggle and hardship, and later by sorrows and cares; but withal, he was what the world calls a successful man and had attained to a position of considerable eminence from very small beginnings.

His voice was always heard when the Union was the theme, and he indulged in many bitter sarcasms against "Copperheads" and other species of disunionist and pro-slavery sympathizers at the North, whom he regarded as a fouler brood than the declared rebels who were in arms against the nation they had wronged and which, he always declared, had not wronged them.

For two years after he lost his wife Nathan Taine remained a widower; but, thinking that it would be better for his son and adopted daughter if he had a good woman who, as his wife, would take a mother's interest in them, he married again.

He was strangely disappointed. In those days he was only the young pastor of a small country church of the Methodist persuasion, and the only lady he knew who seemed suited to his case was Miss Melissa Duncan, a spinster of about his own age, a leader in his church who was reputed to have both money and brains, and the only child and heir of the richest man in the county, who had recently died. This wife never had a child, and instead of being a mother and friend to those who were left to her care, she was from the first cold and harsh towards them and was regarded by them as an ogress, rather than a mother. While still a lad James had gone out and worked for his living to escape the tyrant who

ruled at home, and Hagar had to take his share of Mrs. Taine's unkindness.

"Father Taine," as the minister was usually called by those who knew him well, and particularly by the younger portion of the community, was often saddened by the discordant state of his domestic affairs; but his public duties called him hither and thither in such a constant round of important missions that he had been compelled to leave the children to his wife, who summed up her interest and effort by the soothing consideration (soothing only to her diseased vanity) that nothing could be done with them. She blackened James as much as possible to his father; denounced him as wilful, impudent and deceitful, and at one time, when in a towering rage, reported blasphemy among his crimes. Dr. Taine had his suspicions that his wife exaggerated the faults of the lad, but, though disturbed by her accusations, he had neither time nor patience to go to the root of the matter, or, perhaps thought it best to trust to the future for the solution of his difficulties.

Hagar was a little waif whom the pastor had taken into his home and heart some time before his second marriage. She had been subject from the first to the peculiar antipathy of Mrs. Taine. From her infancy she was of an affectionate and grateful nature—not especially bright or clever, but kind, gentle and winning in disposition. She was liked by everybody except the mistress of Chestnut Grove, but especially loved by Father Taine who could fully appreciate her girlish fancies and the promise of her budding womanhood, and whom she regarded as a great and superior being. She sought his society on every possible occasion, went with him on his journeys whenever it was convenient, remaining still a child in sentiment and affection, though almost a woman in years. She had met a good many people but had made few intimate acquaintances, partly owing to the habit of remaining with her adopted father, and partly to the unsociable and inhospitable reputation earned by her adopted mother, who, by the way, would never permit herself to be called by that name. Her educational advantages had been limited to the customary course in the public school at Newberg, a few cheap piano lessons by an incompetent spinster

in the neighborhood, and such desultory and undirected reading as fell in her way.

It is, indeed, probable that she had more talent for cookery than for scholarship, for she had certainly made some progress in the former science, which could scarcely be said of the latter. But she could write and speak her mother tongue with tolerable accuracy, and except for an habitual gravity which she rarely cast wholly aside, she was as pleasant and vivacious as the average western girl of that period and, perhaps, not more so. The seriousness referred to began to assert itself from the moment she fully realized that she had no father or mother of her own, and although the subject was never referred to by others, except when Mrs. Taine maliciously brought it forward to wound her, it was never absent from her own mind a moment, and the sad expression in her large hazel eyes which became more marked from year to year as a result of her reflections, aroused immediate interest in those who met her.

Mrs. Taine made frequent objections to her husband's attentions and indulgences towards "the foundling," as she contemptuously styled her; but the doctor paid little heed to her unreasonable vagaries, deeming them of a piece with her other incorrigible follies with regard to which, since he had discovered how useless it was to combat them, he had assumed a stoical indifference as the attitude least calculated to stir up strife. If he stopped to argue with Melissa he was lost. Her tyrannical spirit had been carefully nourished and freely exercised ever since she married the doctor; and latterly Hagar had been its principal foil. But the kind-hearted old gentlemen was more affectionate than ever to the orphan since James had gone away, and he seemed oppressed at times by an apprehension that she might be the next to vanish beyond his ken. Her gentle thoughtfulness made her a great comfort to him. When he reached home, weary in body and mind after hours of discussion and turbulence such as had characterized his labors during the last few years, she would bring his slippers and dressing gown, and a cup of his favorite cocoa which she made exactly to his taste, into the library. She studied his needs and his happiness, and brought many a ray of sunshine to his heart when his

brow was clouded with cares of which she knew nothing. The stolid indifference of Mrs. Taine rendered Hagar the more devoted; for it seemed to her almost monstrous that a woman could be so destitute of feeling and sensibility towards a husband who was the soul of goodness and gentleness.

Melissa had never forgiven what she called "Nathan's fall from othodoxy," and only her strong belief in the indissolubility of the marriage tie, had prevented her from seeking divorce at the time of its occurence. She had publicly declared this, and many thought it probable that the doctor would regret her tenacity of a bond which to him must be rather galling. She scarcely ever spoke to him unless to argue theology. She never seemed to think of him as a rational being to whose natural requirements she might administer, but rather as a kind of theological nut she was especially set apart to crack; and spent the time that rightly belonged to the care of himself and the household in arguing that his Universalism was entirely wrong. To prove her case she would insist, at times, during the first years of her married life, on reading whole sections from the works of Calvin and Knox, or some other hardshell divine of remote times whose writings she but imperfectly understood; or, when especially enthusiastic, would bring forth some of her own disquisitions, consisting of "Notes on the Godhead," "Parallel Notes on Faith," "Notes on the Trinity" which, together, would have filled several volumes

One morning a few days after James' accident at the Globe office fire, Hagar entered his room with a small tray full of nice things she had prepared with her own hands for the invalid. She wore a plain dress of some figured cotton stuff, and a neat bib-apron of her own make.

James thought he had never seen her look so pretty, but certainly never so pale. He smiled at her burden of provisions, and when she had placed it on a small table near the bed, extended his hand, saying:

"Good morning, Hagar; who has had the kindness to order me a well man's breakfast?"

"Dr. Warren said last night that you might have a nice chop this morning if you were hungry; but knowing

how I dislike hearing beforehand of what I am going to have to eat I cooked these things for you myself, and I think if you have no appetite now this coffee will give you one. I hope you don't mind, Mr. James?"

"Mind? Yes, I do—I'm very thankful to you, for, to tell the truth, I do feel hungry. Dr. Warren was right—a nice chop is the very thing for my case."

"Oh, I'm so glad, because Father Taine said I might bring you whatever I liked so long as the doctor approved. And you seem so much better to-day—I hope you feel better, Mr. James?"

"Yes—my brain is not so heavy—my mind is clear as crystal."

"And do you feel strong enough to tell me just a little about the fire while you are eating your breakfast;—how it happened, and how you were saved? Mr. Kilbourne has told us that you were shut up by a wall that caved in, how dreadful! Please do tell me, if it won't fatigue you too much."

He glanced at her admiringly as he raised himself on his elbow and began sipping the fragrant coffee. Presently he said:

"I will tell you all I know about it, Hagar, on one condition."

"And what is that?"

"That you will never address me again as Mister James."

"But what will Ma'am Taine say if I speak to you or about you otherwise? She says I have no right to call you simply 'James.'"

"No matter what she says;—I don't know where she came by such a notion, but you must call me simply 'James.' Before she confers any titles on me I want to see her authority; in the meantime I hope you will oblige me by speaking as familiarly to me as she does. We are not living under a monarchy where degrees are marked out with such a nicety that it takes a volume as large as Webster's dictionary to record them, and we won't admit an imperium in imperio by allowing madame to set up a petticoat government in this quarter. No, Hagar, we are equals, provided I am good enough to be your equal. I never had any patience with my step-mother's affectations, and have less now than ever.

Her conduct towards you from your infancy to the present time has doomed her in my esteem. But you have shown yourself a little brick in keeping your footing here in spite of her, and I hope you will never allow her harshness or injustice to drive you away, or even to cast your spirit down. Father loves you, and I—I will see hereafter that you are not imposed on by Ma'am Taine."

James paused a moment and looked intently at Hagar: "Now, then," she said, "you have become sad and I'm sure you are not enjoying your breakfast."

"Yes I am;" James replied, attacking a bit of crisp toast, "but I was wondering why you looked so pale. You appear to have missed your breakfast altogether, for your cheeks were always so rosy. Has the tyrant been meddling with you, lately?"

"No, it is not that," she said, looking away, "but I have had such an awful fright, James."

"A fright? When?"

"Last Sunday." She could say no more at that moment for her voice faltered and she burst into tears.

"What is it, Hagar—can't you tell me?"

"It seems like a dream now," she said at last, "and I am almost afraid to think of it. I began telling it to Ma'am Taine but as she said she would not believe my account unless she liked it, I would not proceed. I have not had an opportunity to tell Father Taine, so that no one knows it but the two men and myself."

"The two men—what two men?"

"The one who attacked me, and—and—the one who saved me."

"Attacked you! what do you mean?" asked James with astonishment.

"I will tell you just how it happened," said Hagar, wiping away her tears. She then described her attack and rescue which surprised and excited James Taine more than any bit of news he had gathered during his reportorial career. Was such a thing possible, he asked himself, so near a great city, on the highway in broad daylight? Certainly the culprit could have been nothing less than an escaped lunatic, he thought, and he asked Hagar about the appearance of the man, and if she had any idea where the one who rescued her came

from. Her replies seemed to offer no tangible clue to either the villain who merited punishment, or the hero who deserved reward.

"All I can remember," she said, "about the dreadful creature who seized me is that he was very tall with a black beard and dressed in black clothes. He picked me up and carried me as if I had been a child, and I thought I was dying when I heard the voice of the young man who came to save me. He was slender but his eyes were dark, and overhung by prominent brows: —his face was smooth, and his complexion dark."

"That's strange," exclaimed the invalid. "Dark complexion you say, and young?"

"Yes," Hagar replied, surprised by his question.

"Was his hair short or long?"

"It was long and curly—I noted that when I thought he was being killed."

"In what color was he dressed?" James demanded with still deeper interest.

"He had on gray trousers and coat, and a blue flannel shirt. I wondered who he could be, and looked at him closely when he was putting on his shoes."

"Can it be possible?" said James. "Why Hagar, you are describing the very man who, that same day, saved me from the fire. All that you have said I should have to say if I attempted to describe him—the blue shirt, the dark eyes and long hair—the prominent brow—I thought his forehead like Shakespeare's as he dashed through the smoke and flames, his hair streaming, his eyes flashing heroic fire that seemed to regard the hissing and devouring flames as its natural element. Could it have been the same?—It seems incredible!"

"You were going to tell me about it, James, when I interrupted you with the story of my fright."

"Well then, I will resume the subject—but I feel certain after what you have said that the same hand that saved you from a villain or a madman, saved me from a fiery death. God grant that he is safe!"

"He was hurt, then?" asked Hagar, greatly interested in the subject of this mysterious hero.

"Yes, you shall hear. My tragedy happened some two or three hours later than yours, which is additional cause for my thinking that we were rescued by

one and the same hand; but Heaven knows that I would rather have been roasted to a cinder than that one hair of your dear head should be harmed. The fire broke out in the press room and originated by the lamp-lighter setting fire to the kerosene with which he was filling the lamps. A 'devil' who was helping him escaped and made known this fact, but the lamplighter was probably killed, by the explosion of the oil. I was in the reporter's room on the third floor writing up from my notes Dr. Gall's sermon which I had attended in the forenoon. Before I heard the alarm of fire, the stairways and elevator were burning, and the entire lower portion of the building was in flames. Many of the partitions were of lath and plaster and burnt like tinder. Shrieks and cries for help were mingling with the cracking and roaring of the fire when I ran into the hall to be almost stifled by the smoke; and some of the typesetters, both men and girls, on the same floor, hurled themselves down the stairs into the midst of the flames. I thought there might still be one chance of life left for me, and realized that nothing but perfect coolness would enable me to avail myself of it. To jump from a window would be death, and the flames were leaping through those I might have reached. By some means, however, I must descend, and in desperation swung myself by one of the burning ropes of the elevator to the second floor, the elevator shaft forming a well of incandescence beneath. Almost suffocated, I fled towards an open window on the right, the dense smoke being momentarily parted by the rushing currents of air which also revived me; but I had only gone a few paces when I was hurled with a mass of smouldering debris to the lower floor. How I escaped being killed by that fall is a mystery. I was stunned, though not unconscious. But I was completely walled in, and could feel the heat of the fire under me which would soon burst through the damp timbers by which I was held as in a vise, and consume me with the rest. My struggle seemed hopeless, and I was about to give up in despair and consign my spirit to its Maker, when I heard a battering noise near me, and a moment later saw the man with the blue shirt and the long hair break through the thin partition and come towards me.

"Where is the woman I saw coming this way before

that wall fell in?" he asked quickly, at the same time shoving aside a timber that formed part of the trap that held me fast. I could only reply that I had not seen the woman, and it was clear we had not a second to lose if we would escape with our own lives. Seeing that I was disabled though he was already burnt and bruised himself, he took me on his shoulder and carried me out through the hole he had made, from what in a few minutes would have been my tomb!" His lips trembled, and he covered his eyes with his hand to hide his tears of gratitude.

"And the woman, did she escape?" asked Hagar, who had listened with rapt attention to his story.

"No, I am afraid not; and he who tried to save her missed her and found a less worthy object for his heroism."

"You cannot judge as to that James," said Hagar with gentle reproof. "But how strange and sad it all seems, and how wonderful it will be if the same man really saved both our lives on that day."

"I am convinced that it is the case"—James rejoined. But at that moment a tap at the door announced that his friend Kilbourne was coming in, and Hagar withdrew without resuming the conversation.

"I see Dr. Warren coming up the avenue," said Mark.

"Then I hope he will bring me news of my mysterious friend."

While they were talking Dr. Warren dismounted at the verandah steps, and handing a letter to the negro servant, Dan, said:

"Please give this letter to Mrs. Taine, I bring it from her husband." Mrs. Taine seemed to take no interest in James' case, and, as usual, did not make her appearance. The doctor proceeded to his patient's room and found that he was progressing favorably.

"There is a full account of the fire in this paper," said the doctor. "You seem to have been pretty well in the midst of it, James; but did you see anything of the fiery genius they speak of here in connection with your name?"

"What do they say about him?" asked James, "for a spirit of some kind saved me from death."

"This must be the one—just listen—" replied Doctor

Warren. He then read the following paragraph from a paper he had brought with him :—

"'When the conflagration was at its height and it seemed that everything burnable must quickly be consumed, a young man was seen making his way through the crowd shouting that there were human beings inside who might be saved. Dressed only in his pantaloons and a coarse flannel shirt, he snatched a heavy bar from one of the ladder trucks, and dashed into the building amid a moan of dismay and a wild "hurrah!" from the crowd. One, two, three—five minutes passed—he was wreathed in fire—the people cried that he had disappeared forever; and who shall describe the hurricane of exultation that greeted him when he reappeared on the very tongues of flame, bearing on his shoulder the disabled form of Mr. James Taine, a talented young reporter on the "Globe."'"

"That is evidently some of Mike's work—nothing pleases him so well as a fling at rhetoric." said Mark, smiling.

"He continues :—" said the doctor, resuming the newspaper :—"'The rescued reporter has been taken to his father's house in the country, and the gallant boy who risked his life to save him and is badly hurt, is being cared for at the City Hospital. He refuses to give his name, residence, calling, or any information whatever concerning himself, and disclaims having done anything surprising. Nevertheless, this community owes him a debt of gratitude for his noble deed, and will certainly not lose sight of him without making a suitable acknowledgement of the appreciation and honor it feels for such a hero.'—What do you say to that?"

"He deserves it all," replied James, with enthusiasm, "and, I suspect, a good deal more. Have you called to see him at the hospital, doctor?"

"No, but I shall do so on my return to town."

"Well give him my best regards and thanks. Tell him that I will esteem it a great favor if he will drive out here with my father as soon as he is able. Father will call to see him again to-day, I presume, if he has time. He does not know that probably Hagar's life was saved that day by the same person who saved me—but such

really seems to be the case." He repeated what Hagar had told him, after which the doctor went away, saying that he would report the matter to the police authorities, and deliver James' message to the most modest of heroes.

Mrs. Taine met the doctor on the verandah, and extended her hand with a formal "Good morning, doctor."

"Will you be likely to see Doctor Taine again to-day, doctor?" she continued.

"Yes, he has promised to dine with us."

"Oh! then please tell him that the contents of his note are duly noted, and that he could not have sent me more welcome news—also accept my thanks as the bearer, doctor." She added the last phrase with peculiar affectation. The doctor, being one of the many who could not understand the mistress of Chestnut Grove did not prolong the interview, but gracefully disengaged himself and rode away.

Though she had already learned the letter by heart she again took it from her pocket as she paced the verandah. It ran as follows:—

DEAR MELISSA:—I send this line by Dr. Warren to tell you that I have found Mr. Smiles, of Boston, who spent a few days with us some months ago, awaiting me at the Tabernacle. In deference to what I knew to be your wish, I have invited him to accompany me to Chestnut Grove this evening. I think he intends to pass several days with us.

Yours, NATHAN."

Mrs. Taine was elated at the prospect of this visit. She had never ceased recurring to the amiability and lovable character of the devout Mr. Smiles, whose former brief stay in her house formed the golden age of her social annals. Ever since she met him she had been in the habit of declaring that he was the only man she ever knew who was entirely congenial to her.

CHAPTER III.

"She loves, but knows not whom she loves." -*Moore.*

Mrs. Taine was busy during the afternoon preparing to receive her favorite guest. Having attended personally to the arrangement of the room destined for him, she put on her best silk dress, which she rarely wore, and pinked her cheeks with vermilion, an art she practiced only upon the most ceremonious occasions. Her crinoline, in accord with the prevailing fashion, was enormous; and her hair was puffed up by combs under a lace cap letting little thin corkscrew curls dance out just in front of her ears. The gold-rimmed spectacles had undergone a special polishing, and, on reference to her looking-glass, she flattered herself that the Rev. Mr. Smiles would find her, despite the disadvantages of her surroundings (which, she thought, he had fully understood), entirely up to the standard of New England ladies of her age and mode of life.

"He can appreciate a woman of intellect," she said to herself as she smoothed down her post-meridian visage before the mirror, "which is a thing these western men are incapable of. And, besides, he is so orthodox—no walking museum of new fangled notions! He said he would like to make some selections from my writings to use in his missionary sermons, and I will give him free access to all my manuscripts. He said also that my thoughts were so noble, and so beautifully expressed. Perhaps we might even compose a great theological work conjointly. I'll mention it to him—" Thus her thoughts coursed on in a kind of ecstacy until she saw Hagar pass the window. A new prospect of almost endless possibilities was suddenly opened up in her mind. She had long wished to rid herself of Hagar, and it now recurred to her that Mr. Smiles had paid the girl great attention on the occasion of his former visit. She thought the matter over in all its bearings, for she prided herself on always being consistent, and wanted

to make this scheme meet that requirement. Hagar never discussed theological questions, but Mrs. Taine had little doubt that she was orthodox at heart, believing she could not understand the rubbish taught by her adoptive father. If she were to let Hagar see that she wished her to accept the minister's attentions she would be sure to shun him like a viper. Her plan, therefore, she thought, was to seem to oppose while doing all she could to promote, the frequent meeting of Hagar with the young parson. Such a handsome and polished gentleman, with his flowery language and delightful manners, she argued, could not fail to impress the girl; and, in case of his being obliged to defer the marriage on account of his slender bank account, for, poor fellow! had he not given up his precious time and talents to the cause of his religion, how simple a matter it would be for her to make him comfortable on that score. And that she would do, because it would place him in the position of a brother and a friend who would be her comforter and adviser.

While cogitating these and a hundred other phases of her project she went into the sitting room, where she found Hagar arranging some flowers.

"I suppose," said Mrs. Taine, "that you remember the Rev. Mr. Smiles from Boston, who came here last spring?"

"Yes," replied Hagar briefly, without looking away from her occupation.

"I thought so; girls now-a-days can remember a man better than anything else. Well, what would you think if I told you he is coming here again, very soon?"

"I do not know—but is it so?" asked Hagar, glancing towards her.

"Yes; and as he is a bachelor not more than thirty it will become you to be very retiring in his presence, and study modesty to the best of your ability."

"I should be sorry if I had to study that, Ma'am Taine," she rejoined curtly.

"Don't bandy words, but try to improve yourself by learning from your superiors. It would be useless for you to think of marrying him. He is too far above you in intellect, in tastes, and, hem! hem! (clearing her throat), family."

Hagar was blushing but strove to conceal her annoyance. This was one of Ma'am Taine's favorite resorts when she wished to be spiteful, and she employed it, as at present, with malice aforethought.

"It is in all cases," she continued, "best not to encourage hopes that are doomed before hand to be blighted. You must be discretion's self or you may be called a coquette with even more reason than heretofore. I am aware, let me inform you, that you have been talking again with that infidel rascal Will Sanders."

"Ma'am Taine, you know he is not a rascal—and you know also that I have Father Taine's permission to speak to him, and to see him whenever I please. Since you have made it impossible for him to come to the house I am going to meet him again to-day at the front gate to say good bye, for he has enlisted and is going away perhaps to die for his country."

"You shall not see him, I say. But if you disobey me I will bundle you into the street and let your infidel look after you," said Mrs. Taine in her harshest voice.

"No you won't, Ma'am Taine!" exclaimed Hagar so quickly that she made Mrs. Taine start. "Had I paid any attention to your abuse I should have gone long ago, when, as a little helpless thing, you used to lock me up without food for a day or more at a time. Had I not been determined to stay in spite of you, I should have been driven away by your cruelty. But I have stifled my own feelings, my pride and my indignation, for the sake of that dear old man whose life you have filled with bitterness." Hagar's spirit was now fully aroused, and her courage was evidently fortified by the reflection that James was in the house. Though Mrs. Taine endeavored to check this speech at every word, she would not be silenced. And now the angry old lady was almost choking with rage, which she vented in abusive epithets. Hagar put her fingers in her ears and fled to her room, and Ma'am Taine had recourse to a mild fit of hysteria.

"I'll be revenged on that audacious foundling!" she said, as she recovered herself. "I have enough to tell old Universality now to open his eyes!" She would inform Dr. Taine of the strange man at the gate on Sunday—the secret conversations with Will Sanders, and

other real or imaginary faults which she thought would serve to prejudice him against his favorite and bring about a crisis that would rid her house of this fury. This she vowed to do by all her theological tracts.

Towards evening Hagar threw a woolen "Nubia" over her head and walked leisurely down the avenue to the gates, where she found Will Sanders sitting on his horse waiting for her. He dismounted to shake hands, and enquired kindly about James Taine.

"So, Will, you are going to the war?" Said Hagar, cheerfully, as if to intimate that their parting must not be a gloomy one.

"Yes, Hagar," replied the young man, in a far more serious tone, "our regiment has been drilling for some time, and we are now ordered to the front. But I felt that I could not go without telling you what you already know—that I love you. Will you not give me one word of hope? it would sustain and cheer me, Hagar, through all the dangers and privations I may be required to encounter. Do you not love me enough to give me this hope?" He must have seen her answer in her eyes, for his tone was really pathetic.

"You know, Will, that I esteem you highly; and I will confess that I have thought I would marry you if you asked me; but now I cannot make you any promise," said Hagar, her eyes bent on the ground.

"You mean that you do not love me—you have seen some one who—"

"No, it is not that," she replied quietly, "I am nobody and yet my heart is filled with myself; my past, present and future throng my mind with images all strange and indistinct, and there's no room in it for anything or anybody else. It seems that I have suddenly grown old in the last few days. It would be wrong for me to promise to be your wife in my present mood." At this she again raised her eyes until they met his with a calm and steady look.

"I shall not be importunate, Hagar, it is enough for me to know that you are frank with me. But I may still tell you that I love you in spite of what you say, that my heart is yours to do with as you like, to crush beneath your feet if that will please you," said the young man, bitterly—and with the ingenuous ardor of inexperience and youth.

"No, dear friend," she replied, her face becoming more pale in response to the flush of color that appeared on his fair boyish cheek," it is too good a heart for that, and true enough to be an acceptable offering to your country. You are laying it upon her sacred altar, Will, and heaven grant it prove a blessed sacrifice!"

"How strangely you speak! This does not sound like yourself, you seem another being!"

"Well, perhaps I am. It is but a few days since I last saw you, and yet I should not know myself to be the same—"

"You are enigmatical," he said, with a distressed look.

"I only speak the truth: You do not know how much I am changed."

"Beware of fanciful notions, Hagar. I fear you are not happy. Can you not confide in me?"

"No, not now," she said, in a sad but kindly voice. "Good bye and Heaven bless you, is all I can say, and that is from my heart!"

"And from my heart I repeat the words to you." He spoke very solemnly, and taking off his hat, raised her dainty hand to his lips.

"And now, before I go," he added sadly—"perhaps never to see you again in this world, will you not allow me to say a word to you as a brother? Apart from my love, Hagar, I feel a deep interest in your welfare and happiness, and at this moment I am oppressed by a vague apprehension concerning you. It has been caused, no doubt, by what you have said. May I speak freely?"

"Yes, Will."

"I have but a narrow experience of the world, and yet, I can fully realize the deprivation you suffer in not having a mother to counsel and guide you at this critical period of your life. You are developing into a handsome and charming woman, and your weal or woe must depend largely, entirely upon the strength and wisdom of your own character. The training you have had in patience and forbearance should stand you in good stead; but an unswerving constancy to yourself must be the invincible shield and buckler which should guard your innocence and beauty. Of all beings, a woman must have a purpose and a will to fulfill it. Forgive me if

I have said too much," he continued with great tenderness, still holding her hand in his. "We have been good friends for so many years.... Good-bye—good-bye ...."

He pressed his lips to her brow, then quickly mounted his horse to conceal his emotion, and sped away like the wind.

Some one has said that the youth of the West are not much skilled in courtly gallantries. Perhaps not; but the native beauty of their characters is often a charming substitute. Will Sanders was only a farmer's son, but he came of Puritan stock, and worked in school and college as well as on the farm before he thought it his duty to shoulder a musket in defense of his country. No knight of any age had a nobler sense of honor than he, and the dear object of his first love was like a goddess in his sight.

Hagar was in tears, but she felt an icy coldness in her heart which was proof against the ardor of his words. A few days before, it would have been impossible for her to have refused him the hope he asked; but now, for reasons she could not explain even to herself, she felt an indifference concerning him which was almost painful. The gathering shades of night were settling about her, and a chilly breeze was rustling through the naked branches of the chestnuts. Startled by the sudden consciousness of being alone, she set out almost involuntarily towards the house, but had only taken a few steps when she heard Father Taine drive up, and turned back to open the gate for him. Another gentleman, whom she recognized as the Rev. Mr. Smiles, was in the buggy with him and immediately alighted. While they were speaking Dan came to take charge of the horse, and Dr. Taine also got out to walk up the avenue with Hagar.

"Upon my word, Miss Hagar," said Mr. Smiles, who seemed to be in the lively mood which she remembered as usual with him, "you have grown so handsome I scarcely knew you!"

The young minister was dressed in a faultless suit of clerical black, over which he wore a fashionable chesterfield. His high hat, his gloves, boots and silk umbrella, were of the latest pattern and best quality. He was of about the medium height, neither fat nor lean, but hav-

ing that fresh appearance peculiar to light complexioned people of his type; he looked amiable and decidedly well nourished, states which are mutually dependent upon each other, and supply a substantial defence against loss of appetite or temper. He was evidently an even, easy-going man, too much of a philosopher to worry about trifles, and too accustomed to carrying his point to let them stand in his way. With the air of being thoroughly self-satisfied he coupled a serene confidence in his ability to make others believe in him. But his immobile, fleshy face was a non-conductor so far as his character was concerned, for it registered none of his thoughts and was but imperceptibly affected by his emotions.

His remark embarrassed Hagar, but he deftly turned the conversation into easier channels, and soon put both herself and Dr. Taine in quite a jovial frame of mind by his flow of wit and good nature.

Mrs. Taine was superlatively cordial in her words of welcome to Mr. Smiles, and said she hoped he had come for a longer stay than he had made on the former occasion.

"You are very kind, my dear madame," he replied graciously, "but I am a sort of bird of passage who never can tell to-day where he will be to-morrow. Luckily, however, I am, while here, in the center of a district in which I have much to do, and I sincerely hope that I may enjoy a few days' repose in this quiet and delightful retreat before I make my presence known to those whose Cure I am. Then, with your permission, I must be absent at intervals, and return to pass an odd day or two with you, as the caprice of my calling will allow. It is only thus that I can snatch a moment from my labors for social joys."

Ma'am Taine looked at him attentively with her sharp little eyes while he spoke, and thought him handsomer, if possible, than when she had last seen him. His voice really had a pleasant tone, and did not suffer in transmission to the old lady's delighted ear. She said that she expected him to make himself quite at home, and that his convenience would be hers if he could content himself with such indifferent entertainment as she could offer him.

In answer to which Mr. Smiles replied that his ideal existed only in the quiet of a country life, if he could but share it with intelligent people. Dr. Taine was silent. He was probably a little weary, and felt no special interest in the polite combat. He presently excused himself and went up stairs to see James. Hagar also disappeared.

The old lady talked on for some time, in fact until she was made aware that supper was nearly ready, and it occurred to her that Mr. Smiles might like to go to his room until the bell rang—Maria had already taken up his satchel and overcoat, and was now directed to show him the way.

"Supper will be ready in a quarter of an hour, Mr. Smiles. You must let me know if you do not find everything to your liking," said Mrs. Taine, detaining him.

"I admit, my dear madam, that I am passably fastidious, but one would be compelled to invent a complaint in your house. None of the mansions at which I am welcome either here or in the East is more pleasant to me than Chestnut Grove." The minister evinced some experience as a gauger of character, for this flourish sank deeply into the heart of his hostess.

The chamber that had been set apart for him was a large and well furnished one on the second floor, adjoining that occupied by James Taine. From a wide French window in the front of the room, there projected a small iron balcony. It was the middle one of three similar balconies on that floor, that on the right opening into James's room. Mr. Smiles flung the window open as soon as he entered, remarking to the housemaid that he was fond of fresh air.

After sundry brushings and ablutions he labored some minutes before the glass persuading his long wavy moustache to take a favorite twist. He then gave his hair a few final dabs with the brush, and proceeded to overhaul his coat-pockets, removing from them divers letters and papers which he stowed away in his satchel. Having taken out various toilet articles he locked and strapped the satchel securely and placed it in the spacious wardrobe which occupied one side of the room, hung up some of the clothing out of his portmanteau, and, after locking the wardrobe, put the key into his

pocket. He whistled the tune of some hymn while thus engaged, and finally lit a cigar and went on the balcony to await the supper bell.

Dr. Taine had told him of his son's accident, but as soon as he stepped outside the window he heard them conversing on that subject. He saw by the reflection from the adjoining window that had been left ajar, and what they said reached him as clearly as if he had been in the same room. The air was getting pretty cool, but the moon and stars shone brightly, and he decided to linger for a time upon the balcony.

"Did you go to the hospital, father?" he heard a voice say, which he supposed was that of the son though he had not met him.

"Yes," replied Dr. Taine, "and found the young man much better—in fact, he says he can go out to-morrow and that he will come to see you soon. He still maintains silence regarding himself. I was astonished to hear what you told Dr. Warren about an assault made upon Hagar, and to learn that this same man saved you both. It is most strange!"

"It is true, then?" asked James excitedly.

"Yes," Dr. Taine replied, "the doctor asked him if he did not have an adventure earlier in the day, for he had heard of a young girl being rescued from a brutal attack, by a person answering his description. He admitted that he was the man, repeated the circumstances, and inquired after the young lady's health. He said the affair ended by her saving his life."

"That is quite true," said James. "Hagar told me that the villain had thrown the young man on the ground, and was trying to draw a knife to stab him when she knocked him senseless with a heavy staff. Most girls would have run away and left him to be murdered, though he had risked his life in their defence."

They thought it strange that so gallant a young man should find it necessary to conceal his name and his home.

When the supper bell rang and Dr. Taine rose to go, James said:—

"Father, I have been planning for an important move."

"Yes? To California again?"

"No sir, I did not mean that kind of a move. I require your concurrence, and perhaps your aid."

"You may count on both to enable you to carry out any good resolution, my son. What is it you wish to do?"

"Since I have met with this accident I think I shall not become a soldier, but turn my attention to agriculture. I want to marry and take charge of the farm so that I can make a home. That is now my only ambition; but if I ever attain a competency which will supply me the needed leisure, I shall take up again the thread of my literary projects."

"Such a course will fully coincide with my views, James, but I was not aware that you had yet made your choice of a wife. That, you know, is the most serious part of the business."

"So far as I am concerned my choice has long been made; but I have not broached the question to her, because, as I said, I want your concurrence."

"I would not step between my son and his choice unless I had serious cause."

"And have you not divined?"

"How could I? I know nothing of your circle of acquaintances, and I have not heard you express a preference."

"Why it is Hagar I love,—I have always loved her."

"Hagar!" said Dr. Taine, starting back with a look of amazement. He had not had a suspicion that such a situation would ever come about, and James's words produced a sudden and acute pain in the old man's heart which seemed to pierce him through. "James," he continued, "Hagar is not for you—it cannot be: she is your sister!"

"My sister? Only by adoption; she is no relation to me; and surely our being reared under the same roof need not be a bar."

"Dismiss the thought, James," said his father, firmly. "Never mention this to Hagar, for it is most unsuitable—it is out of the question."

"How so? why do you wish to balk me in this, about the only favor I have ever asked of you?"

"Because I cannot approve of the union you propose."

"Why not?" he hesitated a moment and then said—"Is there some secret reason?"

The old gentleman shook his head. "What, then, is the impediment?" As his father turned away without answering, he added excitedly:—

"I tell you, father, if Hagar is willing she shall be mine, for there's not another woman in the world like her."

Dreading the effects of excitement upon his injured son, the Doctor let the matter drop, and entreated him to worry himself no more about it for the present. He then left the room.

"Oh! ho!" exclaimed Mr. Smiles, "Hagar is in demand, but under an embargo. Good! Other people are always after my prizes; I wonder whose ticket will draw this one?" Such were the thoughts of Mrs. Taine's guest as he hastily descended to the supper room.

CHAPTER IV.

At supper the conversation turned on the subject of the fire and Hagar's adventure. After Dr. Taine had been speaking solemnly concerning the baseness to which a man must have sunk before he could bring himself to commit such a crime as the one attempted on Sunday, Mr. Smiles lowered himself several degrees in the estimation of Dr. Taine and Mark by saying:

"It is very shocking to hear of such occurrences, but they are, happily, uncommon. Whoever the man was, we must admit he showed fine discernment in seeking to carry off so fair a prize."

Mark looked at Dr. Taine, and it was plain to him that the old gentleman did not like the speech any more than he did. They endeavored to change the subject, by talking about the Army, the Navy, and the attitude of foreign powers; but Mr. Smiles reverted with eccentric persistence to the former theme, and was particularly anxious to have a description of the knight errant who had won all hearts.

"Does he most resemble the immortal Don, or his no less immortal Squire?"

He spoke in a lively manner that pleased his hostess exceedingly.

The doctor described the young man he had visited at the hospital in a few words, when Mr. Smiles said:—

"He may be a deserter, then; or else a refugee slave. He must have some powerful motive for concealing his identity. There are Octoroons, they say, who are scarcely distinguishable from white men, and the black eyes and other points you have mentioned, sound rather suspicious. But, in any case you may be sure that he will expect Miss Hagar to fall in love with him," added the handsome minister with an admiring glance towards Hagar, who was already somewhat embarrassed by being made the subject of so much talk. "For," he

continued, "young ladies always fall in love with the brave fellows who preserve them from danger."

"Very true! Very true indeed, Mr. Smiles," said Mrs. Taine.

Nobody else appeared to be much amused, but the parson continued complacently:—

"On consideration, nothing is more natural. I once knew of a very striking case of the kind:" He proceeded to recount the story. "There is an important fact in connection with these cases," he concluded, "which should not be lost sight of, namely:—That the young lady who is thus preserved could never know the joy of love at all but for the champion who saves her, ergo—whom should she love if not the one who had preserved to her the power of loving?"

"You would infer then," said Mark pointedly, "that the lady in the present case must fall in love with and marry a deserter or a refugee slave—an octoroon who cannot be distinguished from a white man?"

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Kilbourne," replied Mr. Smiles with perfect good nature, "I do not wish to infer anything of the sort. The tenacity with which this young gentleman has kept back his name is a little surprising, you will admit. But, he may be a Russian prince in disguise, or the son of Uncle Abe Lincoln himself for aught I know."

"Perhaps," said Hagar, rather seriously, "as the subject of so much comment is expected to come here in a few days, we might wait until then to satisfy our curiosity. I think we are not likely to prove him either a slave or a deserter."

"He is a singular person," remarked Dr. Taine thoughtfully, "singular in every respect. He is, seemingly, neither ignorant nor educated, polished nor uncouth; but there's something genuine and straightforward about him, and nothing that I could discern, to give color to the supposition that he had a guilty cause to conceal his identity. He has certainly laid us under heavy obligations, and I feel a lively interest in him. Perhaps the thin veil of mystery which now envelopes him will vanish sooner than we expect. He is evidently a young man of character who has a purpose, and so far as we can judge, it is not a bad one."

Shortly after supper Mrs. Taine took her guest for a stroll on the lawn in the moonlight, leaving the doctor and Mark to their cigars in the dining room. Hagar hurried up stairs to look after the invalid. Mr. Smiles expressed great satisfaction for Mrs. Taine's adroitness in delivering him from an uncongenial spirit which his suavity and good nature had failed to exorcise.

"To me, my dear madame," he said, in a tone of good faith, "you are a much more substantial deliverer than the hero of shreds and patches of whom we have heard so much this evening. That fellow Kilbourne, whom I am pleased to note, you do not like, is an awful bore. He looks at one as if he were contemplating manslaughter, and talks like a pettifogging lawyer."

"It is one of the lightest of my crosses, my dear Mr. Smiles," responded his companion, as she leaned confidingly on his strong arm, "that I must submit to the presence of that person in my house. You cannot feel a greater antipathy for him than I do. When I say my house," she continued, "I say what is literally true: Dr. Taine has nothing. His Universality friends were mostly poor when he went over to them, and as I had a sufficient income of my own to meet all demands, he has spent his earnings, which were meagre enough for many years, in the cause of his sect, and to promote the interests of Abolition. The value of my property both in Cleveland and here has greatly increased in the last few years, to such an extent, indeed, that I have wealth enough to see the world now, and to make quite a different figure from my present self. This life is too contracted for me and always has been. I want to live in Boston, in London, and in Rome. I have no relatives except those I have acquired by marriage. So I may as well enjoy the benefits that money alone can purchase, travel, experience and culture in foreign lands. You must advise me, my dear Mr. Smiles, for you are the first and the only man I have ever met, whom I thought capable of aiding me in that way. You have been abroad—I remember your mentioning it last Spring." She spoke with girlish eagerness that inwardly amused her guest, who was fully alive to the grateful sensation she experienced in the rare treat of an attentive and sympathetic hearing.

"Merely as a boy, when, I fear, it did me little good. I have often wished that I might enjoy the advantages of which you speak; but poor men, you know, my dear Mrs. Taine, must be content to labor on without encouraging vain longings, in the narrow and ofttimes barren vineyard where their lot is cast. I agree with you, however, that those who have wealth have a right to enjoy it to the utmost, so long, of course, as they do not forget their duties as christians. But will you allow me to revert for a moment to Mr. Kilbourne. Is Miss Hagar in love with him?—you will pardon my asking such a question."

"No, indeed, she is only slightly acquainted with him. But I am glad you have put the question for I think I noticed while you were with us in the spring, that you took a good deal of interest in 'Miss Hagar.'"

"I do not deny it, but you must be possessed of an uncommon power of penetration to have remarked the fact, my dear madam."

"Perhaps so, but I have remarked another fact which may be even more important if you are in earnest——"

"Yes? What is that?"

"That she is greatly interested in you. She was not unmindful of your superiority over other men she had met, when you were here before. She had not counted on seeing you again, but I am certain that your unexpected coming has not only revived the old interest but greatly increased it. You might have her for the asking."

"You think so?"

"I am sure of it."

"And may I count on your assistance?" he asked with affected anxiety which Mrs. Taine readily accepted for genuine.

"With all my heart," she replied, "if you really wish it."

"As you are fully aware, my dear madam," he went on in a low, confidential voice, "the obstacle at present will be my straightened finances. I shall not attempt to conceal from you what my wishes are, but—you know the adage—"

"'Man proposes,' and so forth?" said Mrs. Taine.

"Well, of course, you know best, and you must decide for yourself, so far as I see at present."

She was on the point of telling him one or two important thoughts that were revolving in her brain, but she kept them back and gradually brought the conversation round to her favorite topic, the scandal of the neighborhood, in which Mr. Smiles seemed to take a lively interest. The cool breeze which had sprung up at sundown had now died away, and the moonlit night was warm and balmy. Mrs. Taine appreciated the favors of Nature most thoroughly on that occasion, and felt a strong conviction that she was performing an important part in some vague romance.

Meanwhile Mr. Smiles was the subject of a short but somewhat pointed discussion indoors.

"No," said Dr. Taine in reply to Mark Kilbourne's question, "I do not know much about him. He presented himself to me in the first instance with a letter of introduction from a member of my former congregation at Newberg, who has, for some years, been a resident of Boston. He has returned on the strength of the brief acquaintance then formed, and appears to be on good terms with the people of his persuasion in this neighborhood; I heard several persons speak of him in the highest terms after he left here last spring."

"For my part," Mark replied, "I don't like him: to my material eye he wears the ear-marks of hypocrisy if not imposture. I should set him down for a wolf and take care he did not enjoy too free a range among lambs of mine."

"Ah! Mark, that sounds like prejudice. We are prone to judge too hastily of the demerits of our fellow men. The best may possess peculiarities which are distasteful to us, but I believe, as a rule, that they are the safest who take the least trouble to conceal them."

"I may be wrong; but I profess some skill at spotting a scoundrel, and I should unhesitatingly class this slippery divine under that head. Like a deadly pill, he is the more dangerous from being sugar-coated."

"He has at least one fervent admirer here," said Dr. Taine, referring to his wife, "and one who is not considered overcredulous. Their religious views, I believe, are similar (one can scarcely say identical, I find,

of any two persons of average mental acquirements.) I suspect that he is fishing for a handsome subscription, which he is likely to find a very delicate point indeed on which to approach madam." This suggestion seemed to amuse them.

The cantankerous disposition of Mrs. Taine had caused an almost complete suspension of friendly intercourse between Chestnut Grove and the neighboring estates. But, as is frequently the case with people who are on bad terms with their immediate acquaintances, she could show great tenderness and amiability towards any one from a distance if she but received a good first impression.

In the course of their walk she had initiated her reverend companion not only into the very sanctuary of her own domestic affairs, but also into that of others in whom he could not feel the remotest interest. After a scathing criticism, a sort of broad-side of shrapnels which swept everything before it, she paused at a rustic bench that stood in the shadow of an evergreen near the gate, and invited her guest to rest awhile. She sighed wearily as she took her place beside him, and continued her complaint:—

"Such are the people by whom I am surrounded, and you can imagine, my dear Mr. Smiles, how a woman of my highly sensitive and intellectual nature must be affected by these opposite and uncongenial forces. Not a soul, even in my own house, to appreciate one of my lofty ideas; not one that has either the capacity or the desire to grasp the divine mysteries which delight my soul, or to share with me—or learn from me, such sentiments as would tend, in time, to raise them to my level. The men and women of my own generation have all gone mad on Abolition, Universalism, or some other hideous 'ism; and the younger ones are free-thinkers or infidels. Irreligion and ungodliness have thrown the country into civil war from which, it is plain to the enlightened ones of Israel, it can never emerge except in fragments and in ruin. The cup of the scoffers is full, and only the righteous shall inherit the earth!"

The old lady was evidently inclined to continue this harangue indefinitely since she was spurred up to her

declamatory pitch, but her companion was rather tired of it. After a suppressed—

"Dashed if the old woman is n't a copper-head!" he led her gently from questions of doctrine and contemporary history, back to the personal details she had touched upon and left unfinished.

"As our views are virtually identical on these subjects, my dear madam," he continued after a few flattering exclamations" would you not oblige me by continuing the more than romantic incident you just mentioned of the young Southerner and Miss La Salle? His name, you said, was—?"

"Philip Leigh."

"Yes, yes; that is it. And his father was one of the richest planters in Louisiana?"

"He is so," said Mrs. Taine, emphatically, "and the ungrateful Philip has had every advantage that a Southern gentleman knows how to give his son." The ease and spirit with which she reverted to this subject showed that it was congenial to her mind. She had noted as an unmistakable evidence of his good sense, that Mr. Smiles, though he must have very different opinions, had made no objections to her pro-Southern sentiments. She had long prided herself on being a "Peace Democrat" and an ardent admirer of "Southern chivalry," though it must be confessed that her ideas were sufficiently vague concerning both.

"I was telling you," she continued, "that he studied military science in France after graduating at West Point. While there he attracted the attention of the Empress and was introduced at Court. Well, some time before South Carolina resolved to secede he fell out with his father concerning the attitude of the South, and declared his intention of using his sword for the Union in case the states rights doctrine should bring on a war. A quarrel of the bitterest kind was the result, and he came north just a month before the fall of Fort Sumter. He had no sooner made known his loyalty at Washington than he was given an important commission by the Government, which brought him into Ohio. At Cleveland he was welcomed by a few people who had known him at West Point and in New Orleans, and at one of their houses met this Miss LaSalle, with whom, it

seems, he fell desperately in love. They were married a few weeks after they became acquainted, and the old saw is exemplified in his case—he 'repents at leisure,' they say."

"Here is material, certainly, for a romance," exclaimed Mr. Smiles. "And you know this interesting young patriot?"

"Oh, yes," she replied, with a cynical smile, "and hate him cordially! His is a double-dyed secession, from his father, and from his fathers cause, and for such a woman, too! He is already mad with jealousy, and a friend of mine who lives near them tells me it is not without good cause."

"I should like to meet him. Does he ever visit you here?"

"No; he and James are friends, but he knows I don't like him, and has not been here to call for months. Hagar likes his wife but I have discouraged their intercourse. You might see him any day at Newberg if you feel sufficient curiosity: but they say he is dull and unsociable; his only amusement being the game of chess, and his soldiering his only employment. You can draw him out, however, if you only talk Union and anti-slavery and don't let him catch you admiring his wife."

"But who was Miss La Salle?" asked Mr. Smiles, affecting not to notice her closing words.

Mrs. Taine's sneers and depreciation in relation to Mrs. Leigh, were altogether gratuitous. She had never been on friendly terms with the La Salles, who were for many years near neighbors of her father, for they had not considered her a pleasant person either as Miss Duncan or since she became Mrs. Taine. They had never been so rich as the Duncans, but were more refined by nature and by culture, and far more amiable.

"She has been an orphan for some years," continued Mrs. Taine. "Her parents were very poor, but proud, and she was their only child. They claimed to be descended from the famous French explorer Chevalier La Salle. Of course we all know that it may be so, but as my poor father used to say, 'the descent must have been through very doubtful channels.' Josephine has nothing to recommend her but a pretty face and certain frivolous accomplishments."

"Josephine, then, is her name? It is a favorite with me: you did not mention it before," said Mr. Smiles.

"It is very French, you know, and I can't say that I like it. Prior to her marriage she was living with an invalid aunt who was poor but moved in the best society of Cleveland. She has recently died, and a friend of mine who lived with her for some time, tells me that Josephine was jilted by a young Southerner of very high family, while on a visit to relatives of her father's in the South some six or seven years ago—not without being smirched, too, they say!" said she, with that peculiar emphasis and rising inflection on 'they say' which ever characterizes the malicious gossip, and especially the old one.

"Poor girl!" exclaimed the missionary with an expression of earnest concern. Then changing his tone to one of keen interest, he enquired:—

"And how did Captain Leigh make her acquaintance?"

"I thought I told you—at an entertainment in Cleveland. There were several versions of the affair at the time—but, though I may not like a person, I pay very little attention to gossip. I did hear it was love at first sight, but some said, on his part, while others declared that she was the victim and he only married her to console her. They are wretchedly unhappy, I believe!"

They were interrupted by the clatter of a horse's hoofs and the appearance of a horseman at the gate. He leaned over and opened it as if familiar with the latch, and, without noticing the gossips, entered and trotted rapidly up the avenue.

Mrs. Taine was in a quandary. Who in the world could it be at that time of night? Of course she must hurry to the house at once to investigate this mysterious arrival. Father Taine and Mark, hearing the horse, came to the door, and both were as much delighted as surprised to grasp the hand of Captain Leigh.

"I have only just heard of James' accident. How is he?" said the Captain, anxiously.

"He is badly hurt," replied Father Taine, "but is getting on favorably."

"I went to Columbus on Monday, and have had no

news except the war news while away. I received the first intimation of James's misfortune in a letter from my wife. I hope I may be allowed to see him?"

Mrs. Taine and her guest now came up the verandah steps, and the former marched directly into the sitting-room saying as she went:

"Won't you all come in where we can see who you are?" They promptly complied, and when she recognized Captain Leigh, she gave him the tips of her fingers with icy formality and said:—

"How do you do, Mr. Leigh."

It was nine o'clock, and Mark and Captain Leigh made haste to go to their friend's room as soon as Hagar brought his permission. When they were gone, Father Taine retired to his library where he labored usually until after midnight, and Mr. Smiles found himself alone with the ladies—a situation in which he seemed not at all lonely.

At his request Hagar went to the piano and played two or three light selections in true country-girl fashion. Though she possessed musical talent she had lacked the opportunity for development. The young minister succeeded her at the instrument, and after having commended her undoubted taste, which he thought it a sin to have neglected, he dashed off some of the gems of Beethoven and Stephen Heller in truly artistic style. He then sang in a full and rich baritone, selections from several operas, a popular ballad or two, and concluded his programme with a spirited rendition of the Marseillaise in very fair French.

His performance was sufficiently effective to have charmed a much larger and more discerning company. Hagar was deeply impressed, and made no attempt to conceal the fact. Mrs. Taine was delighted. During his former visit he had played for them, but had excused himself from singing on account of what he called a "parson's sore throat," which then troubled him. In the course of his performance this evening Mrs. Taine had resolved an idea she had long cherished into a determination: she would offer to make him her principal heir.

Hagar thought that her withdrawal would be agreeable to at least one of the trio, so she excused herself

and was leaving the room when she was met at the door by Captain Leigh and Mark.

"Ah! Miss Hagar," said Philip, "you are a great stranger, and I have a commission from Josephine to ask you why you do not come to see her."

"You must tell her it is not because I do not want to see her," replied Hagar. "She is my dearest friend, and the next time Father Taine goes to Newberg I will accompany him."

"Mrs. Taine has been telling me your wonderful history, Captain Leigh," said Mr. Smiles, approaching the young soldier.

"It were better untold—I am sorry she mentioned it," replied Philip, abruptly.

"True patriotism, my dear sir, may be modest, but it need not resent praise, I hope, nor hide itself under a bushel. What a noble example you have set to the rebellious sons of the South!"

"I doubt it, sir," said Philip, looking the parson calmly in the eye. "Had I a son who treated me as I have my father, I should kill him like a viper that attacked me. The die is cast: I have deserted my father and his cause for what I deem, rightly or wrongly, my country and my duty. But I want no praise at this stage of the game; my conscience often smites me for what I have done. I would to Heaven that I could bury this blot out of my sight, but I shall not waver; my path is marked out, and though it lay through adamant I will hew away while life lasts."

"To become converted to a good cause, to the right, was ever accounted honorable," observed Mr. Smiles, urbanely.

But Philip was restless to get away, and made no reply. Turning to Mark, he said in a low voice:—

"Mark, I want you to come as far as the gate with me, I have something special to say to you."

"Are you starting for the front soon, Captain Leigh?" asked the minister.

"I cannot say, we are drilling recruits and awaiting orders."

"They tell me that you are an adept in the science of arms" pursued the parson.

"No!" replied Philip emphatically, "like many in that and other professions, I only know the alphabet."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Mark in reply to something the Captain said as they walked down the avenue.

"It is quite true," he replied. "My cousin very shrewdly sent his letter to a mutual friend in New York, and its contents are full and conclusive. I am to be abducted and carried alive into Kentucky if possible; but, if this fails I am to be shot dead wherever found. You heard what I said to night? I learned the lesson from the father I was speaking of—this is his order."

"And what do you think of it?" asked Mark.

"That those who are to execute the order will find it too difficult to carry me away living, and to earn their money more easily will assassinate me—perhaps on my way home to-night.

"Have you such a presentiment?" asked Mark, his face turning deadly pale at the thought.

"Oh, no; not so bad as that. I don't think I ever had a presentiment in my life, I scarcely know what it means. I have no great love of life, but I don't want to fall by the hand of an assassin. For myself I do not regard this plot with alarm: but others are in danger. No life is to be spared that stands in the way of my taking off, and what would be more likely than for them to come to my house at night and murder Josephine lest her cries should arouse the neighborhood? Being in an enemy's country their motto will be silence and despatch, and they will scruple at nothing to compass their design. But I would rather pay the full penalty than let the authorities know that my father has decreed me such a fate. What can I do to protect others without having it appear that I am menaced?"

"I am sorry, Phil, that you ever moved out of Cleveland," said Mark.

"My cousin expresses the same regret, but I think without cause. In my opinion locality does not govern danger, it may fall or fail anywhere."

"Do you think the desperadoes are in the vicinity?"

"It appears that they have held their commission since the Rebel reverse at Pittsburg Landing, but have been baffled by my movements."

"I certainly think," said Mark, "that the General ought to be informed of this. He need not know your father is in the plot, but he would not forgive you if

you failed to let him know that you are seriously threatened."

"No, Mark: not one word, I entreat. If once it becomes known, I must produce the evidence in my possession, which would probably do little to help me and would brand my father with eternal infamy. I rely on your silence. To-morrow I will write to the General and ask to be relieved from my present duty and ordered to the front. Ah, Mark!" he continued as he grasped his friend's hand at the gate to say good night, "I wish I were like you instead of the outcast that I am. My heart almost fails me at times and I doubt everything:—the cause to which I have devoted my honor and my life; the friends who surround me—even the being who is more dear to me than all the world—"

"Pshaw! Phil:—what folly—I thought you had filtered that poison from your mind long ago. You wrong her virtue even more deeply than your own judgment."

"I often think my mind must be diseased, or that it bears the taint of the vitiated atmosphere in which I have lived so long where doubt and suspicion linger: twin occupants of the brain. At times my confidence wavers like my resolution: then hideous images goad me to madness. To seek and find the means of torturing myself seems to be my only genius. But let that pass. We have been like brothers, Mark, and I want you to be a brother indeed to me while I am away. You must take care of Josephine, be her guardian and protector until I return—but if I never do return—"

"Why Phil, you know I am going into the army myself. What nonsense you are talking! You are gloomy and out of sorts, and must cheer up. I'll come down and spend a day with you soon; it's too late to try to drive all this rubbish out of your head to-night, so I'll take a day for it especially. Really, if a stranger should hear you talking like this he would think you insane. Don't borrow trouble, Phil: life's too short. A care buried is worth a dozen resurrected. But I won't lecture you at this hour as you have some distance to travel, and I must get back and see my patient comfortable for the night."

CHAPTER V.

Until long after midnight Doctor Taine lingered in the library and seemed to be both mentally and physically depressed. Several volumes were lying open on the table within his reach, passages in which he was comparing with something he found in the large book that was drawn near him under the broad lamp shade, and which chiefly occupied his attention.

He frequently paused and pressed his hands to his forehead with deep drawn sighs that were the utterance of a far deeper dejection. He had addressed himself to his usual task in the earlier part of the evening with about his ordinary spirit. But the prehistoric and historic analogies which he had been examining for some time in connection with the accepted doctrines of modern Christian theology, failed on this occasion to attract his mind to the same concentrated efforts as formerly. In spite of his best endeavors to avert so unseemly an amalgamation, he found the heroes of mythology and the personifications of Egyptian and Buddhist theology inextricably involved with the saints and historians of the Church; and, at length, these and all the rest mixed up with the dramatis personae of his own domestic and professional comedy. There seemed to him, more than on any other occasion that he could remember, a delusive intangibility about everything, both past and present, and he felt a certain alarm at the chaotic state in which all appeared. Was it his mind that had produced the chaos, or was it the external chaos acting upon his mind?

"Surely," he thought in his perplexity, "I have reason enough to ponder! My fireside deserted by the dear ones who should nestle here in comfort and peace, my heart steeped in wormwood instead of domestic love! What a rank and infernal inconsistency for a man who cannot keep order in his own household to pretend to teach others the way to Heaven! And is not this the natural outcome of these theologies? They all strive

to compass the world to come at the expense of the world that is here; but if we cannot learn to live in this world, how shall we know how to live in a better one?"

The doctor had long since become aware that to whatever extent the doctrine of justification by faith might be carried in the case of others, it had in it no consolation for him. The conviction that religion meant action rather than mere belief was growing stronger in his mind from day to day, and he had named the fact from his pulpit much to his hurt among the orthodox. He was conscious of some irreligion in his own life, and had no doubt his present suffering was a partial punishment for it; but to what extent could past errors be corrected by consistent effort to that end? Could they ever be obliterated, or was the sinner, like Sisyphus, forever burdened with a woe that will roll back upon and torture him?

"Some people," he mused, "even among my own congregation, call me an infidel. Somebody has informed them that I read the works of infidels, and that the flavor of those works comes out in my own discourse. I am not certain that this accusation is devoid of truth, for if the definition of infidelity given by the chief of these offenders be correct, I must be classed with them: —He says that an infidel is one who pretends to believe what in fact he does not believe at all. Well, then, I am an infidel, for I tacitly admit every day of my life belief in legends and dogmas which I secretly discredit and suspect."

This aspect of the case was quite a new one in the doctor's contemplation, and caused him much uneasiness; for he was a true and conscientious man according to his light and understanding, and he doubted not that if such was in truth his own condition, the same might be said of many others in the pulpit.

"Yes," he resumed, "it is even so. The masses demand myths, and we satisfy the demand at the price of our convictions and our honor, to secure their support."

Though he had been subject of late to severe attacks of despondency, he had never felt so cast down as on this occasion, and it was after three o'clock when he put out the lamp, and, wrapping his warm dressing gown snugly about him soon fell into a heavy slumber in his easy chair.

There Hagar found him when she came in at seven o'clock with his cocoa and toast. He awoke as she opened the door.

"Ah! I have caught you, you naughty, naughty, old man!" she exclaimed as she approached and patted his face affectionately with both her plump little hands. "You have sat up all night again after what you promised me—it is very wrong of you, dear father." She threw her arms around his neck and kissed him fondly as she spoke, and then stroked his brow which she thought was rather feverish.

"No, my darling," said Dr. Taine, "I was thinking about subjects which troubled me, and I felt no inclination to go to bed. But if you will forgive me this time, I promise to be better in future. How delicious this cocoa is: I should not have it but for you. Do you think that you will one day wish to leave me?"

"No, dear father, never!" she exclaimed as she noted a slight tremor in his voice. She meant to be sincere, but the moment she had spoken the words she was conscious of a presentiment which belied them. She was about to add something by way of qualification, but was prevented by Dr. Taine who seemed to be relishing the light breakfast she had brought him.

"Hagar, as I have an early engagement in the city this morning, will you tell Dan to have my buggy ready in half an hour. I forgot to mention it last night."

It was a clear bracing morning, and as Hagar crossed the lawn to repeat the message to Dan whom she saw coming in with the milk pails, she was met by Mr. Smiles who was sauntering about the grounds smoking his cigar.

"Good morning, Miss Hagar," said the minister, saluting her gallantly. I see you are, like myself, an early riser. The morning is undoubtedly the best part of the day, for then all nature, like the human mind, is refreshed by the night's repose. It is then that the intelligence expands and takes impressions which are impossible at any other time. Have you come out for a walk?"

She delivered her message to Dan and was strolling down the avenue in company with Mr. Smiles when he said:—

"I was interested in the account Mrs. Taine gave me of that young man who came here last night—Mr. Leigh. Have you known him very long?"

"Over a year," replied Hagar.

"I was sorry," continued Mr. Smiles, "not to have a better opportunity to converse with him; he seems a brilliant fellow, but I should say he is rather eccentric."

"He is thought peculiar, I believe."

"You must make me acquainted with him, Miss Hagar; could I not call with you? You mentioned last night that his wife is a friend of yours."

"Yes, and I am anxious to go and see her. But Father Taine hasn't time to take me, Ma'am Taine dislikes Josephine and declines to visit her, and I am afraid to go alone."

"We must try and prevail on her; and if we succeed, may I join the party?"

"Ma'am Taine must answer that, Mr. Smiles."

"Then I'll ask her at breakfast."

They presently heard the bell, and on returning to the house met Dr. Taine on the porch. After the usual greetings Mr. Smiles said:

"I was struck with the appearance and bearing of that extraordinary young patriot who called last night, and should much like to have a better acquaintance with him."

"He is reserved and dislikes any special attention, and it is probably owing to his modesty in this respect that he excites universal interest. Still, you can readily become better acquainted with him. Has Hagar told you his history?" asked Dr. Taine, as they went in to breakfast

"No, I heard it from Mrs. Taine, before his arrival last night. I think his case is unparalleled."

"It is explained by a simple circumstance: though to the manor born, he was too enlightened by experience and observation beyond and outside the South to be blinded by the sophistries of the Rebel cause. He had long since refused to join the order of the "Golden Circle," because he discerned the treasonable ambition of its designs; and I understand that he worked with a zeal that was truly noble to prevent the demoniac frenzy of Beauregard which he rightly foresaw would

set the country in flames and turn the beautiful South into a wilderness. You may hear some of copper-head proclivities who will tell you that it is a case of captivity to a woman's beauty; but the truth is that his allegiance to his country was full grown long before he met her. She may be a reward for his fidelity, but she was certainly not the cause of it."

"The wife of the Captain, then, is remarkable for her beauty?" asked Mr. Smiles.

"Nobody can deny that she has a very pretty face," said Mrs. Taine, "but I'm sure I, for one, do not think her remarkably beautiful. Still Captain Leigh saw enough of the world before he married her: he ought to have known what he was about."

Hagar soon afterward found an occasion to express her opinion that, though Mrs. Leigh's beauty was remarkable, her true merit lay in the goodness and gentleness of her character. Mrs. Taine took offence at this amiable praise which seemed to challenge her own statement, and the subject was dropped.

After breakfast Dr. Taine and Mark started for the city. It was a little after nine o'clock when they reached the suburbs, and as they were passing through a square that was the daily scene of a produce market, they saw a crowd assembled in the open space and heard loud threatening language which seemed to indicate that a fight was in progress. The doctor stopped at the roadside, and as the crowd surged in that direction, Mark stood up in the carriage and could see that a solitary individual who appeared to be struggling for his life, was being maltreated by the others, while the air was rent by their derisive yells and laughter.

Mark leaped from the buggy, and was quickly followed by Dr. Taine, who called a boy to hold his horse. Mark penetrated the throng far enough to see that the butt of the mob was a young man, that he was pinioned, and was being very roughly dealt with. The participants in the assault, as well as the noisy bystanders, acted as if they thought him lawful prey: while the men spattered him with mud or quids of tobacco, the boys, and even a few old crones, were pelting him with potatoes and other missiles, and doing and saying all they could to heap insult and opprobrium upon him.

Not a policeman was to be seen. The approach of Father Taine was remarked by some of the roughs, and when he asked in the spirit of a peacemaker what the unfortunate man had done to call down their wrath, a thick-necked fellow, who seemed to be a ringleader, bawled out:

"What has he done! why he's cooked his own goose, haint 'e boys? He's a blasted Mormonite and comes here—here into the sacred precincts of this market, to give us his chin-music on that tack—and we haint goin' to have it, be we boys?"

"No!" yelled the crowd, with renewed energy.

"He says he's a saint—I wonder who canonized him!" screeched one of the huckster-women who flourished a piece of bed cord ready-noosed to slip around the Mormon's neck. "Just let me come at him," she shrieked with fiendish zeal, "I'll soon put him through the ceremony."

As yet Dr. Taine had not been able to catch sight of the object of the rabble's ire. Mark now rejoined him saying that the mob were committing a flagrant crime and that they must summon the police. A man who was taking no part was sent with all haste to the nearest station and the two gentlemen remained for the purpose of preventing what seemed likely to prove a tragedy.

"Come on, my hearties!" cried the coarse ruffian who had previously replied to Doctor Taine. "Come on now; lift him up high and dry and let's give him a nice present, a coat of tar and feathers! That's the thing for birds of his kind. Then we'll treat him to a first class ride on a rail; for he's a poor cuss, used to hoofin' it without shoes on; he's not used to luxuries, but his prophet, my old cronie, Joe Smith, knew how to appreciate such things, and it will elevate the saint's soul to copy arter his master!"

A wild shriek of laughter was the crowd's reply. Some of the roughs who were nearest the Mormon, seized him, and carried him by main force through the opening made by the mob.

Father Taine now had a full view of the Mormon, and, turning to Mark, said excitedly:

"Why Mark, its the young man from the hospital, the man who saved Hagar!'

"Are you sure of that?" asked Mark.

"I am!"

"Then this shall cease at once. Look here, my men," he said, with authority, "You are committing a criminal act, and if you don't put that man down, I'll make you suffer for it."

"Oh! will you?" roared the stalwart leader. "And who are you, my fine clad youth?"

"No matter who I am," replied Mark. "The man you are abusing is the hero of the great fire on Sunday; don't you see the scars on his face."

"Yes," urged the doctor in a voice of entreaty, "he is doubly a hero, for he saved the lives of my daughter and my son that day. For shame! for shame! to maltreat a helpless fellowman!" He was near enough now for the Mormon to hear his voice. The poor fellow was exhausted and had ceased to struggle when his tormentors stood him on the ground and eyed him with curiosity. They had all heard the story of the "Globe" reporter being saved by a man who kept back his name, and many among them knew the venerable minister by sight. The bystanders were now inclined to side with the Mormon, but again the leading bully sprang forward, exclaiming in a mocking voice:

"Oh! you don't say, do you? He saved your daughter! Did he? Well then, I'll just give him one for his own salvation to grow on."

He pressed towards the helpless young man with the evident intention of giving him a terrible blow with his sledge-like fist; but Mark stopped him.

"You cowardly ruffian! would you strike a man with his hands bound?"

"Yes!" the saucy rascal replied, "or loose, either!" And so saying he struck out with all his might at Mark's head. The latter deftly warded off the blow, and returned one on his assailant's temple that felled him to the ground. The sympathy of the crowd was so much divided by this time that a majority was in favor of the right side, and before the other bullies could attack Mark, the police arrived and put most of them to flight by the mere act of appearing on the scene.

"Here's our business," said the sergeant: "Who struck this man?"

"I," replied Mark." He attacked me, and I knocked him down in self-defense."

"No explanations! You can make them to the Justice. Come along." He laid his hand on Mark, and the other policeman kept back the crowd. Dr. Taine attempted to tell the sergeant about the violent scene they had witnessed, but he waved him back with an injunction to keep his evidence for the police court. As he was proceeding to take the names and addresses of some of the bystanders whom he intended to summon as witnesses, the man on the ground began to recover consciousness, and the young Mormon, who had just told Dr. Taine that he was assaulted because he ventured to preach the christian religion, pointing to the fallen bully said:

"That man is the one who attacked your daughter. He has shaved off his beard, and is differently dressed, but I know he is the man." By this time the ruffian had staggered to his feet and was trying to steal away unnoticed.

"It is a serious charge, but are you certain?" asked Dr. Taine, in a whisper.

"As I hope for a hereafter, I swear to you that I am certain!"

"Detain that man," said Dr. Taine to the sergeant. "He is not only at the bottom of this difficulty, but is wanted for a still more heinous crime." The charge against him was repeated to the officer who had already, in common with the rest of the force, received instructions from the chief touching this matter. The policemen looked well-pleased with their morning's work, and marched their prisoners off to the Central Station with a good deal of swagger.

Justice Coles was in his court-room and the regular morning session of his court was about to begin; but he was a personal friend of Dr. Taine's as well as a member of his congregation, and on catching sight of him and Mark Kilbourne among the rabble in the hall, came out to inquire what was the trouble. From what he gleaned, he ordered the release of Mark, and the committal of the leader of the rioters (who gave his name as Adam Joyce) for hearing next day. Joyce was taken away to the cells at once, and the Justice invited the

doctor, Mark, and the Mormon into a private room, the latter individual, owing to his morning's adventure, presenting a pitiable appearance.

"What is your name, young man?" asked Justice Coles, looking at him curiously after comments by both Mark and the doctor regarding Hagar's rescue and the fire.

"Spencer," he replied briefly.

"Your given name?"

"Charles."

"Your place of residence and your present address?" pursued the judge, jotting down his answers.

"My home is in Salt Lake City, Utah, my present address, a sailors' boarding house in Erie street, this city. I only went there from the hospital this morning, and did not notice the number."

"You have good grounds for this charge?"

"Yes, sir, I am so certain that he is the man I would stake my life upon it."

"Well then, I hope you will be able to bring forward sufficient evidence to convict him. We will give the case a preliminary hearing at ten to-morrow morning."

They separated shortly afterwards, Mark going to the headquarters of the State troops, and the doctor taking Spencer in his carriage to the Tabernacle.

The private quarters of the minister at his place of worship, were pleasant and well appointed; they had evidently been constructed with a view to equal comfort and convenience. The library was carpeted with Brussels, and furnished in walnut: handsome and well-filled book-cases stood between the windows on one side of the room, while on the other the walls were hung with the latest charts of Palestine and the Roman Empire, and several fine steel engravings of Biblical subjects. The surroundings indicated the cultured thoughtfulness and easy finances of the doctor's supporters.

Spencer had never seen anything of the sort before. He had only known the naked austerity of the backwoods where Spartan plainness and simplicity are universal for the reason that Athenian luxuries are out of reach, and he regarded all these trappings as indicative

of the sway of the "Scarlet Woman." The contrast between this and the small adobe shanty with slab benches familiar to him, was irritating, and he resented it with vivid if suppressed disgust.

Dr. Taine showed him to an inner room, where he found all the conveniences of a gentleman's boudoir, that he might repair, as far as washing and brushing could, the damage he had suffered from the mob. All this, to the eye of the missionary, was but further proof of the worldliness and vanity of the Babylonians, which meant everybody except the members of his own sect.

The worldly appliances, however, helped to improve his appearance considerably, and when he returnd to the library he found the doctor sitting before a cheerful anthracite fire awaiting him.

"I congraulate you, Mr. Spencer, that you were not seriously hurt," the doctor said cordially. "Sit down and let us talk awhile. My plans for the morning have been broken up by this occurrence, and we shall now enjoy a few moments without interruption. As I was saying, I knew your father well for several years before he joined the Mormon prophet, and it strikes me as somewhat remarkable that you, his son, should come here now as an apostle of his sect and make me in a moment so greatly your debtor. The circumstance is one of extraordinary interest, is it not?"

"It is as surprising to myself as to any one," the young man replied, thoughtfully.

"But why were you so persistent in the concealment of your name?"

"It turns out to have been entirely useless; but my object was to prevent people from confounding a personal act, into which I was forced by circumstances, with the sacred duty I have come here to perform. I did not wish to give them the opportunity of saying that the Mormon missionary sought to make himself conspicuous by any means whatever outside his work as a minister of truth, and I am sorry that to-day's trouble has given our enemies this advantage."

Dr. Taine hoped that he would not encourage so bad an opinion of mankind as to suppose they could ascribe base motives to one who dashed into the flames to save a fellow being, and gave it as his belief that so soon as

it became known that the Mormon missionary and the hero of the fire were one, he would be able to prosecute his mission in peace.

"I shall rejoice if your prediction prove true, but I have serious doubts," replied the Mormon. "The people of Ohio hardened their hearts against us long ago, and they are not likely to soften them in a day, especially in such times as these."

"At least, I will promise to do my best to insure you a peaceable hearing while you remain here, for I hold that any man who is sober and rational has a right to express his views in this free land of ours, and the only alternative of the public, or any partof it, is not to listen, to go its way, if the opinions he supports are obnoxious. Mob violence is always bad and generally has the opposite effect from what is intended—it may, and often does, destroy truly good and useful men; it gives color to the plea of persecution and martyrdom so often raised by the champions of dangerous heresies, and thereby prolongs the existence of the evil institutions which, left to themselves, would soon perish and be forgotten."

"I apprehend that you make a covert reference to our cause; and, without discussing its merits,I have no hesitation in saying that we have always been most flourishing when hardest pressed by enemies without and within. We have grown fat on persecution: that was the Lord's way of scorning the machinations of the ungodly who injured us. 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.' At the time of the martyrdom of the prophet, Joseph Smith, and the destruction of our beautiful Capitol, Nauvoo, it looked for a while, as I have often heard my father say, that complete dissolution was at hand. But such appearances only belied the designs of God concerning his people Israel, and a very brief period under his guidance was sufficient to render us doubly as rich and numerous, and more united than ever before." The young missionary spoke with fervent enthusiasm.

Dr. Taine, in answer said that he would be the last man in the world to deny the hand of God in the destiny of men, but that the fact must be kept in view that Brigham Young was a much abler man than Joseph Smith.

"The latter, he added, "possessed the talent to draw such a sect about him, but it required the character of Brigham Young to organize and keep it together. His move with an entire people into the wilderness that only wanted human labor to turn it into a paradise, was one of the boldest and most magnificent strokes in history. His predecessor had gone to the Missouri years before, but had turned back, and recrossed even the Mississippi, and so what might have been a Mormon empire is but a territory of the United States. The prophet missed his opportunity. He seems to have lacked both courage and faith. But, not so Brigham Young. He is a penetrating politician, and a man of strong and energetic will; fertile in the resources required for the role he has assumed, he is also correct in judgment where his interests are concerned, and enjoys the confidence of his people because his life is consistent with his teachings. Such a man must know, in his secret heart, that by establishing polygamy he has licensed a monster of evil that will soon stifle all the good he may accomplish."

The Mormon's eyes sparkled and the blood mounted to his temples as he said impetuously :—

"You say this, Dr. Taine! you whose daughter was assaulted on the Sabbath day in this christian State of Ohio!"

"I did not say it to provoke you, my young friend, and if my remark has had that effect I most gladly recall it, and we will drop the subject," replied the doctor, who was surprised to see the sudden anger of the Elder.

"No, I am wrong," continued the young man in a lower voice, "the point will bear discussion; and though I should have no hope of convincing you, I shall be willing to express my views, (or, rather, those of the saints) concerning the doctrine and practice of celestial marriage, if you care to hear them."

"Let me hear, then, what you think yourself of the doctrine and the practice."

He began by stating that the doctrine was of divine institution, not only in ancient times among the patriarchs who enjoyed the privilege of walking and talking with Jehovah, but had been rehabilitated in all its pristine beatitudes by a direct revelation from Heaven in

these 'last days.' The practice was intended by the Almighty as a great boon to all unbelievers, and such it had proved to be among the saints, where women were never wronged by men, because the sacred avenue of marriage was open to all; dishonor and misery, which were common to the rest of the world, were unknown to the people of Zion—virgins were never undone—wives and husbands were never cheated of their rights!

He waxed so eloquent, indeed, in his praises of the terrestrial paradise beyond the Rocky Mountains, that the doctor looked at him with admiration, and was on the point of applauding his ingenuous fervor when he stopped speaking.

"A practical demonstration of the use and the truth of polygamy, as revealed to us," pursued the young man earnestly, "is constantly held up before the eyes of the world, and woe unto them if they will not see it:—Your cities are steeped in vice and corruption, your homes are blighted and dismembered by lust, the vicious haunts are thronged by the frail victims of married men; but your theology does little or nothing to stop this growth of sin, while ours goes to the root of it;—what you have made a curse we make a blessing; God has given us the key and the power by which to prevent the blight that is settling upon the earth!"

The doctor perceived that further argument would be useless at that time, and gently interrupted him to ask if he had fully informed himself as to the moral condition of American homes and cities, or observed among the saints the benificent results of which he spoke. He replied that of the first he only judged by newspaper reports and the accounts given by Mormon elders who had labored throughout the States; of the last he merely described what he knew to be the facts.

Dr. Taine commended his earnestness, and expressed a belief that he possessed a spirit to command and enforce success. Though he reflected that it was a pity such a spirit was not given to a better cause, he said kindly:

"You are sincere, I am sure, and I see no reason why the cause you represent has not as good claims to public toleration as many others which enjoy that boon. What

you have said has interested me. I shall be pleased to recur to the subject at more leisure. I like to observe all forms and phases of human thought and action with the broadest tolerance, because, by the opposite course, we are liable to overlook as of no consequence, phenomena which are necessary and important adjuncts of that onward struggle in which, I hope, we are all of us engaged."

A ring at this moment announced the arrival of visitors with whom the doctor had business.

"My daily routine now commences, and I must reluctantly ask you to excuse me," he said, taking Spencer cordially by the hand. The visitors came in, but he merely saluted them and conducted the shabby young Mormon to the door with the utmost deference. He would not let him depart until he had promised to call often to see him, and that he would drive out to Chestnut Grove next day after the hearing at the police court.

"I will accept your hospitality, Dr. Taine, not because I want any return for what I have done, but in the hope that I may be the means of bringing you or your children to a knowledge of the true faith."

The Elder's face was as serious as that of an Indian chief in council. The doctor smiled complacently, and pressed his hand as he said "good day."

Spencer hurried to his humble room on Erie street, where he sat down listlessly and occupied his thoughts with something rather outside his mission work. He had thought of the same subject a good deal for some days past; in fact, it had scarcely quitted his mind for a moment since it first found a place there.

"I walk by short stages all the way from the Missouri River and preach in more than twenty different towns and villages," he reflected, as he sat knitting his brows and pressing his palms against his forehead. "During the entire journey I do not travel a mile on the Sabbath, because wherever I am on that day I find a few seekers after truth who listen to my message. But on this particular Sabbath I am carried by force from my lodgings before daylight and driven from Elyria by a christian mob! Hungry, despondent, and footsore, I press on towards Cleveland for the express purpose, as it now seems, of saving two lives and almost losing my own.

'How mysterious are thy ways, oh Lord!' And now, the image of that lovely girl haunts me like a beautiful vision. I never saw such exquisite grace—and she, this sweet May morning of perfect woman-hood, owes me her life—perhaps much more than that! That good-natured old minister of error will take care that I have no opportunity to win her to the Gospel, but if she thinks of me—"

He stopped suddenly and picked up the Book of Mormon which lay on a small pine table near him, with a sad look about the bare and cheerless room, but both his appearance and his sighs gave proof that at that time he could find no solid consolation in the text-book of his faith.

"I don't see my way so clearly since I met her," he muttered. "Perhaps this is a trick of Satan to turn me from my duty; but it shall not succeed!"

He resolved to forget her; but when he went out to seek a hearing among the rough men on the wharves, her sweet image went with him, and combat as he might, he could not banish her from his heart.

CHAPTER VI.

"Alas! the love of women! it is known
To be a lovely and a fearful thing;
For all of theirs upon that die is thrown:
And if 'tis lost, life has no more to bring
To them but mockeries of the past alone."—*Byron.*

The preliminary examination of Adam Joyce on the charge of 'Assault with criminal intent' did not consume a great deal of the court's time next day. Soon after he was lodged in jail he had sent for one of those clever pettifoggers who thrive on the garbage of the slums in nearly all our cities, and who form the most effectual barrier against justice that exists in any country. The judge offered to let him go if he could procure bail, but, as there was then nobody at hand who could oblige him, he talked through the bars to Mr. Amicus Fish, the minion of the law he had summoned to his rescue. He chose this gentleman for the reason that he had known him to get many a rascal out of a scrape; for Joyce, it appears, had been a frequent attendant at the police court, and was especially delighted when a known black-leg went scot free owing to some trick or quibble of the legal jackanapes who defended him.

The court-room was crowded at an early hour, chiefly by the rabble who had amused themselves at the expense of the Mormon in the market place, and by a miscellaneous audience that had come to get a look at "the fiery genius," who, as the morning papers announced, turned out to be only a Mormon missionary, and the first one who had been seen in Cleveland for a long time. They said no more about rewarding him for his bravery.

Justice Cole was noted for a learned conscientiousness in the discharge of his trying duties, and the city, to emphasize its appreciation of his services, had recently reelected him for a fourth time to a post in which he had given complete satisfaction to all except the criminal element. He was an honor to the magistracy of first instance in our country.

Father Taine and Mark came in with Spencer, and shortly afterwards the Justice took his place on the bench and the case of Adam Joyce was called. Spencer as prosecuting witness was first sworn and put upon the stand, and, by direction of the Justice made a full statement of the case, substantially as recorded in the first chapter of this history.

"Are you able to indentify the man whom you found committing this assault? Do you see him in this court-room?" asked the Judge.

Joyce had not been placed in the prisoners box, but sat with his lawyer and a number of friends and sympathizers who grouped themselves about him near the attorney's tables. Spencer had selected him as he went up to be sworn, and replied promptly :—

"Yes. It is he whom I denounced yesterday, the large thick-set man there with the dark stubble on his face, caused by the recent cutting off of the heavy beard he wore on the day of the assault. The name he gave, Adam Joyce, corresponds with the initials "A. J." on the handle of this knife, which I found on his person while he was lying stunned." He handed the ugly-looking weapon to the bailiff who placed it on the Judge's desk. Justice Coles watched the face of the prisoner while the witness was speaking, and was fully assured by what he saw there, that the Mormon had denounced the right man.

"Adam Joyce what have you to say in answer to this charge?" asked the Judge, slowly.

"It's all a lie yer honor!" cried Joyce, springing to his feet.

"Hush! sit down," said Mr. Amicus Fish to his client, in a tone of suppressed reprimand, as he rose with bantam dignity to address the court.

"I beg your honor's pardon for this irregular outburst of righteous indignation on the part of my client. If your honor please, we plead "Not guilty" and I shall prove in a few moments, to the entire satisfaction of the court, that this is one of the plainest cases of mistaken identity—if not one in which malice is the sole instigator—that ever occurred in this country. My client is fortunately safe from this malicious Mormon's attempt to ruin him, and the circumstance sup-

plies a striking instance of how Providence protects the innocent from the schemes of the wicked. We have here several respectable and disinterested witnesses whose evidence will establish an alibi that cannot be overthrown : not even the Mormon prophet himself with all his power of performing miracles could make this vile charge stand against a citizen so manifestly blameless; a citizen indeed, who is a favorite with all who know him, an honest laboring man who earns his living by the sweat of his brow, and not by playing the part of a prowling sponge, a blood-sucking vampire, like his miserable accuser."

Judge Coles listened patiently to Mr. Fish's remarks, and many among the audience thought that the dismissal of the charge was a certainty.

Several witnesses were called, among whom was the proprietor of the Pontiac Tavern. After being sworn, five of them in succession testified that they were with Joyce at the Tavern on Sunday from early in the forenoon until after midnight, and that he was not out of their sight during that time. One of these witnesses was the keeper of the tavern, who in reply to a question by the Judge said that the Pontiac Tavern was a well known and popular hostelry in the southern suburbs of the city, a favorite resort for hucksters, teamsters and others who were fond of good cheer at moderate cost. The attractions offered consisted of bowling-alley, billiards, cards, and such other amusements as customers might require, to say nothing of the choicest beverages to be had anywhere, and the best brands of tobacco in the country. He spoke glibly, like one availing himself of an occasion to advertise his establishment, and had the appearance of being an assiduous patron of the wares he praised.

The Judge had taken the precaution to have but one of these witnesses in the Court room at a time, and noted that each of them had a different recollection as to the weather on Sunday. Other discrepancies, no less marked, occurred in their evidence except as to the one question of Joyce's whereabouts. Mr. Fish was visibly disturbed by the Judge's questions and his witnesses's answers; but without commenting upon their variations, the

Judge saw which way the wind blew, and again called Spencer to the stand.

"Have you any further evidence to offer in support of this charge?" the Judge demanded.

"As I have before said," replied the Mormon, "I was the only witness besides the young lady herself; but, notwithstanding the evidence we have heard, I am still perfectly confident that this is the man. The rough-cut initials, "A. J." on the handle of that knife are one of the chief supports of my evidence, unless Miss Taine is summoned. But I shall be willing to confess that I am mistaken, if, on examination by a doctor, there is not found on that man's head the mark of the blow the young lady dealt him when he was trying to kill me."

A good deal of commotion both among the audience and among those who surrounded Joyce, was caused by this speech. Mr. Fish was seen to hold a quiet conference with the accused, and the latter made a lunge as if he would like to come near the witness. It was some time before order was restored, and then Attorney Fish was allowed to have his say:—

"Your honor," said he, buttoning his rather seedy looking black-coat and taking a handkerchief from a pocket in one of its long tails, "I object, as every civilized man must, to this bare-faced defiance of this court, this attempted insult to honest men who have given their testimony under oath, though they are all men whose word would pass current where the pretended saint's bond would be ignored. I am surprised, as I have no doubt you are yourself, at the studied insolence of the Mormonite; a miserable vagabond who is, at best, but a wandering disseminator of infamy, the only effect of whose character and teachings is to make us blush that such creatures belong to our kind and pass for men! I need scarcely point out to your honor the drift of his contumacy and malevolence, it is as plain as the light of day. My client was one of a party of young fellows, who, in the exuberance of youth which we all admire, played a practical joke upon him, and now he seeks to revenge himself by denouncing him as the vilest criminal. Does not your honor recognize in this the spirit of Simon-pure Mormonism? I most emphatically assert that I do; and will here confess what I am

heartily ashamed of, that I once belonged to the sect myself and left because such was its spirit. As to the initials, the witnesses who know the accused have declared to your honor that they never saw such a weapon in his possession; it is therefore most probable that it belongs to this Mormon, and that he put the letters on it since he heard the name of my client yesterday. Indeed, sir, I assure you that they bear a very striking resemblance to the Mormon hieroglyphics invented by Joe Smith, and were certainly never cut by my client, who is, himself, something of a carver on wood." (Mr. Fish probably referred to carving quarters of beef on the butcher's block. His joke sent a titter round the room, and some of his most pronounced admirers even clapped their hands.) The interruption lasted but a moment and he went on:

"This charge has not a leg to stand on; and must my client be subjected to further outrage and humiliation before this court and before the world, after it has been clearly shown that he was more than a mile from the scene of the alleged assault during the entire day of its alleged occurrence? We protest most solemnly, your honor," continued the lawyer with melo-dramatic gravity. "The mark of a blow on the head, indeed! Who knows but what this latter-day-saint made a mark on this gentleman's head in yesterday's melee with a view to bringing it up now as an evidence of crime? Certain it is that my client was knocked down and severely injured—"

"The court is informed of that circumstance," observed the judge. "And the witness was not the one who struck him."

"But can the court say that the witness did not kick my client on the head after he was down? I will only observe that the Mormon has taken the wrong bull by the horns; we are watching him and have it in our power to bring his malice home to him with compound interest!"

The judge interrupted to send the bailiff for the City Physician whose office was in the same building.

Mr. Fish then proceeded:—

"If the court please, I will here state that we have every reason to believe that the accused was brutally

kicked on the head by this witness when he was lying on the ground in an unconscious state. I am assured of this by gentlemen who are present, and who inform me that the witnesses of the fact may be found if the case be adjourned until to-morrow. I have, therefore, to request that the case may be held over until three o'clock to-morrow afternoon."

"One moment, Mr. Fish," said Judge Coles. He then called Mark Kilbourne for the prosecution, and had him sworn. He testified as to the conduct of Spencer after Joyce was knocked down in the market place, declaring that he stood some distance from the fallen man talking to Dr. Taine who was untying his pinioned arms.

Mr. Fish made a faint attempt to badger the witness, but quickly perceived his disadvantage, and Mark was excused.

The judge next called Dr. Taine, who stated positively that Mr. Spencer was at least fifteen feet from the defendant when the latter was knocked down, and that he did not go near him either while on the ground or afterwards.

"Very well," said the Justice, quietly, after he had excused Dr. Taine. "I find, Mr. Fish, that I cannot adjourn this case until I have had your client's head examined by Dr. Black. He is an expert in such matters, and I understand you to admit that the defendant has marks of recent injury on his head?"

"Any man may have such marks, your honor, but can they be made an evidence of guilt where an alibi of the most conclusive kind has been proven? It is not because we fear the result of the examination, your honor —oh! no! far from it!—It is because we respect the dignity, the sacredness of Justice, that benign goddess who rules triumphant in the courts of this free and enlightened land, that we protest against the examination of this gentleman's head, who stands before your honor, and before the universe, as an innocent, I may say an immaculate citizen; one whose only offense appears to be (according to the evidence) that he has incurred the enmity of a Mormon, a rebel sympathizer, whose spleen is tickled by the spectacle of the stars and stripes trampled in the mire, while his victim is

ready to give his life in the defense of that glorious banner of liberty! Tried before a jury on such trumpery evidence, this outraged gentleman would be acquitted instantly; but my own anxiety about the case is wholly patriotic: I do not like, in this critical time, to see the state lavishing her declining revenues in useless and unjust prosecutions. I therefore move that the case be dismissed, and that these plaintiffs be assessed in the costs." A portion of the audience applauded Mr. Fish as he took his seat. The Judge gravely informed the offenders that if there was any further interruption the court-room should be cleared.

He then cited certain legal maxims, at the conclusion of which he ruled Mr. Fish's motion out of order, and said that the examination must be concluded there and then. Finally he again interrogated the Elder, who had not left the witness stand.

"Can you inform the Court about where Miss Taine struck her assailant—whereabouts on the head? on either side, the back, or on the forehead? And did she strike him more than once? The stick must have sought out a tender spot to enable a frightened girl so to paralyze an able-bodied man."

"She struck him but one blow; and as his face was close to mine at the time, it must have fallen on the back part of his head," said the Mormon. He was then excused, and the Judge ordered the defendant to come forward.

Dr. Black arrived, was sworn, and proceeded to examine the prisoner's cranium, which was covered with short, spiky, black hair.

"There is a slight swelling, and an ugly contused wound, much discolored, about an inch and a half back of the right ear," said the doctor examining the wound carefully.

"How would you say that wound had been inflicted, Dr. Black?" asked the Judge.

"Possibly by a fall against something no harder than wood, or by the kick of an unshod horse; but from its close resemblance to the effect produced by a policeman's baton, of which I have studied a great number, I am of opinion that it was inflicted by some kind of a round wooden club."

The judge was the more impressed by this statement as the doctor had not heard the evidence, and probably did not know what case was before the court.

"You insist that it was caused by some instrument of wood—But why of wood?" asked the Judge.

"Because such a blow with an iron weapon would have cut the scalp—would probably have killed the man, in fact."

"How long a time has elapsed, do you suppose, since the wound was received? Was it done yesterday?"

"No, sir," replied the doctor, taking another look at Joyce's pate, "That wound is of at least four or five days standing."

Mr. Fish attempted to cross examine him, but finding that he was not likely to elicit anything to help his case, he sat down, and the doctor withdrew.

Judge Coles then summed up the case in a few choice sentences, and remanded Joyce for the consideration of the Grand Jury, fixing his bail at $2,000. The inn-keeper and a well-to-do butcher signed his bond, and he left the station with them.

The persons interested in the prosecution had gone out as soon as the Judge gave his decision. They still dwelt upon the case as they walked along, and Mark gave it as his opinion that while much more evidence might be brought before the Grand Jury, it would be advisable if not absolutely necessary to have the villain confronted and indentified by Hagar herself.

At Chestnut Grove, the day was occupied by Mrs. Taine in mapping out her own little comedy. Dr. Taine had told the household on the previous evening about the scene he and Mark had witnessed in the market place, and their discovery that the mysterious young man who had proved a sort of nine days wonder was nothing more remarkable than a Mormon missionary. Had he announced him as a boa constrictor, Mrs. Taine could not have been more horrified, for there was not a word in the language which struck such a discord in that lady's being as "Mormon;" to her it signified all that was detestable. But after her first surprise had subsided she had occasion to reflect that in the present case even a Mormon might prove of some value. She had been aware that Hagar was thinking pretty seriously

about the wounded man in the city hospital; that she had written him a sympathetic note and sent some flowers which Dr. Taine had delivered to him before he learned who he was. "But the fellow being a Mormon," she chuckled with satisfaction, "has entirely spoilt him in her eyes—at least so it seems and so I hope; but as old Universality must needs bring him here to-night, I will make sure before he comes."

As early as possible, and when Mr. Smiles was out for his morning walk, the old lady called Hagar into the sitting room and lectured her on the Mormons and their practices with as much graviy as had characterized the Judge of the police court. Hagar looked grave, but said nothing. The simple mention of the young man's religion had begun to blur the image of him which her fancy and her gratitude had painted on her heart: Mrs. Taine's criticisms seemed to erase it altogether: For, to the average citizen, the Mormon was as much a social pariah as the negro. It must be admitted that Hagar felt very much disappointed to find her ideal of gallant bravery reduced to so unheroic a figure; but she was rather vexed than grieved by the circumstance, and seemed quite willing to listen to whatever Mrs. Taine wished to say.

Having praised Mr. Smiles to the skies as the most noble, exemplary and talented man she had ever met, the old lady told Hagar plainly that he was desperately in love with her, and had been so ever since his former visit:—

"In fact," said she, with unwonted kindness in her tone, "that's what has brought him here and that is why you find me so much more your friend than formerly; though you must confess that it was your own fault that we were ever anything but the best of friends. But, like true Christians, we will let by-gones be by-gones. Mr. Smiles has asked me for your hand, which is sufficient proof that I have said everything in your favor."

Hagar blushed and was visibly embarrassed; but after a few moment's pause she said with a faint smile:

"I fear that is too much good fortune to be thought of."

"What do you mean?"

"Why to gain so good a husband and yourself for a friend as if by magic. I am afraid you are only making fun of me, Ma'am Taine."

"Indeed, I was never more in earnest. I admit that his estimation of you has somewhat altered mine; but, if I have been sparing of my favors to you alone, it will be my pleasure to make amends now that you have become necessary to his happiness." The old lady drooped her eyelids and twirled her thumbs nervously for a moment and then added:

"Of course, if such a man had met me at the proper time of life, I should not find it necessary to do as I now intend. But, regrets are vain," she said abruptly after a moment's pause; "As I am to tell Mr. Smiles your answer, what shall it be?"

"I hardly know," replied Hagar, pensively, "He has said nothing to me about it—he has not told me that he —he loved me."

"That's probably because he wanted to find out if you cared for anybody else; for he insisted that you would be sure to fall in love with the man who saved you. He had more hope the moment he heard this person was a Mormon, as he did not think it possible that you would throw yourself away upon such a creature, even if we would permit it; for what woman in the possession of her wits would choose to go into the far West to drudge as a washwoman and cook amongst a lot of scare crows who are fit for nothing better? You'd have to become a Mormon, too, whether you believe in it or not, for these people, like the Jews, are not allowed to take even a concubine out of their own church. You must answer 'yes' or 'no.' Mr. Smiles will be very unhappy until he knows what his fate is to be."

"Won't you tell me, Ma'am Taine, which you think I should say?" asked Hagar, with palpable emotion.

"'Yes,' of course, you silly girl. You will never have such an offer again."

"But what will Father Taine say?"

"Leave that to me. To convince you of the extent to which I am studying your welfare, I will tell you that I shall immediately deed at least $200,000 of my estate to Mr. Smiles. You will reap the benefit of my munifi

cence, and I will call you my daughter and him my son. My purpose is, after you are married early in the Spring, to sail for England at once, taking both of you with me, of course. Mr. Smiles is a splendid linguist, and was abroad with his parents when a child. But becoming reduced in circumstances, he has never been able to gratify his taste for foreign travel and culture · while I, poor woman, have been compelled to stay cooped up in this dreary place for want of an escort. After a few months in Great Britain, we shall proceed to the Continent, and remain abroad until this horrid war is ended. You can surely answer now?"

Mrs. Taine expected an enthusiastic acceptance, and was angry and disgusted when Hagar declared that she must first ask the advice of Father Taine.

"I thank you for your kindness, Ma'am Taine, and I don't mind admitting to you that I like Mr. Smiles very well—I scarcely know how well! But it would be very hard to leave Father Taine," exclaimed Hagar, clasping her hands over her face, and bursting into tears.

"Well," said Mrs. Taine disdainfully, "whatever it's to be, don't let's have any sniveling about it!"

While she was speaking Mr. Smiles came in.

"Ah, Miss Hagar, what's the matter? As they say in the play, 'wherefore these tears?'"

"It is certainly a strange time to weep when everybody wants to make you happy," said Mrs. Taine, severely.

At this Hagar endeavored to brush away her tears, excusing herself by some reference to Dr. Taine, which was rendered incoherent by her sobs.

"Of course," said Mr. Smiles, "you understand, my dear Mrs. Taine, that this matter must not be mentioned to Dr. Taine yet awhile, not, in fact, till I give the signal. It is rather sudden, and he will think better of it if brought to his notice later on."

"You are quite right: discretion is most needful in such cases," echoed Mrs. Taine.

A look from the young minister was sufficient to remind her of important duties in another part of the house, and she quickly disappeared, leaving the young people alone together.

Mr. Smiles was not the man to be at a loss for some-

thing to say in any emergency, and he proved his talent by making himself especially agreeable and interesting to the young girl he had resolved to win. She soon became quite merry under the influence of his lively sallies, and was particularly amused by a verbal picture he sketched for her of himself as the champion of true religion, engaged in a deadly combat against the Mormon heretic, and herself as the fair prize which was to fall to the lot of the victor. She did not leave him in doubt that her own sympathy would be with the champion of true religion; perhaps she was too eager to make that clear, and suspected as much herself, for she retreated so far as to say:

"But, perhaps I am wrong; for, did you not say the other day that I ought to love the man who preserved to me the power of loving?"

"Ah! yes, but we were not then in possession of the information that he is a Mormon who probably has half a dozen wives already."

It was a glorious day and Hagar accepted his invitation to come out and play croquet. Everything considered it is not surprising that James Taine was entirely forgotten at dinner time by his usually sedulous attendant, who had never experienced so much pleasure in the game of croquet as it now afforded her. Mr. Smiles was conversing all the while in his delightful way; at one moment recounting some strange story about the war or the Mormons; and then, quickly shifting the scene he would land her among the wonders and beauties of the European capitals, of which he sketched so realistic a panorama that the bewildered Hagar almost fancied herself among the scenes he was describing.

At dinner she ate very little, and withdrew to her room saying that she would renew the game, as Mr. Smiles requested, a little later in the afternoon.

On her way upstairs she suddenly remembered her neglect of the invalid, and when she reached the landing saw Maria coming out of his room with a tray in her hand. In answer to her questions the housemaid replied that she had taken him some dinner as directed by the missus, but that Mr. Taine refused to eat.

Hagar felt deeply hurt, and as soon as Maria left her, began to cry. Her memory went back to a time when

she was ill: how kind and thoughtful James had been to her; how patiently he had waited upon her, and with what gentle solicitude he brought and urged her to take every delicacy her palate fancied and the doctor allowed! These thoughts stung her to the quick, for she told herself that a selfish distraction had made her neglect the one who had been so careful never to slight her.

As soon as she could sufficiently control her feelings, she went into James's room and found him very pale. He turned his eyes toward her sadly as she approached, but did not extend his hand as usual.

"I hope you are not feeling worse, James; though you certainly look so," said she, nervously, as she stroked his brow with her soft little hand.

She stayed and talked with him for some time and thought she had never seen him in such a despondent mood. To her it seemed very likely that he had suddenly become worse from his injuries; it did not occur to her that he was suffering more from mental than physical pain; but such was the case. His open window was not so far from the croquet ground as to prevent his hearing her merry laugh and the complacent voice of her companion during their unusually protracted stay. James had already suspected that Hagar admired the parson, but he felt certain now that the case had assumed a far more serious aspect, and that it was probably too late to speak of his own passion which had been fed and encouraged by her recent kindness and attention to him. He was convinced by the circumstance of her neglect that she felt a stronger attraction elsewhere; but his perception had not gone so far as the actual drama had progressed, and he was astonished when in reply to some bitter remark of his concerning the "detached parson," as he was pleased to call his step-mother's guest, Hagar replied with exquisite ingenuousness:

"I must tell you, James, that Mr. Smiles is a nice young gentleman: even you will like him when you are better acquainted. He has asked my hand in marriage—and—and—he's to be my husband. She hung her head and stammered a little over the last words, and did not raise her eyes until James spoke.

"So soon!" he exclaimed.

"It seems rather sudden; but we became acquainted when Mr. Smiles passed through here in the spring. I think you will be satisfied when you know him better, and find what a clever, agreeable man he is."

The wounded man left alone, his thoughts were all of her: He had treasured the precious fancy in all his wandering, that sometime Hagar would be his wife; and in finding that she had given her heart to a stranger felt an incalculable pang. This parson's name sounded uncanny to his ear; and his one visit to the sick-room had convinced the invalid that the name was suited to the man.

James divined that his step-mother had suggested Hagar's course, and he had seen enough of human nature to know the vanity of opposition. But he determined to mention it to his father, as he might never detect what was going forward until it reached a climax if those concerned had any motive for acting quietly.

Dr. Taine came home somewhat earlier than usual, bringing the young Mormon with him, and Charles Spencer was introduced to Mrs. Taine, Hagar and Mr. Smiles directly. The situation was a somewhat trying one to the unsophisticated young Saint, who was accustomed to only the most primitive social arrangements, and appeared in his plain, ill-fitting, homespun suit, his coarse cow-hide shoes and slouched hat, very much like a farm-hand dressed in his best to attend a country fair. The most that Mrs. Taine could do was to patronize him in a manner to add to his discomfort; but Hagar endeavored to be gracious, and Mr. Smiles quickly brought his fine tact to the rescue and soon succeeded in placing the young barbarian at his ease. Dr. Taine also did his part to produce this happy result, and when his protege was fairly reconciled to his surroundings, hastened up stairs to see James.

After affectionate inquiries, his father asked if he would like to see Mr. Spencer at once, or if he preferred to receive him next morning.

"I want to see him presently;" said James—"But, wait a moment, father," he added, as the doctor turned to go. "I want to ask you if you have heard the news."

"The news!—what news?"

"Why, that Hagar is going to marry this man Smiles."

"I have heard nothing of it; may I ask who has informed you?" demanded the doctor, with concern.

"Hagar, herself."

"Then I shall hear of it in time, no doubt."

"That you hear of it now is opposed, I believe, to Mr. Smiles' intention. Hagar betrayed it inadvertently to me. I think you will hear nothing of it unless you inquire."

The young journalist was quite right; the doctor heard nothing.

He found the group down stairs greatly interested in the Mormon, who was giving them an account of an Indian attack made in the Black Hills upon the party with which he had crossed the plains. Hagar was by far the most attentive and appreciative member of the audience, and even regarded the stranger with genuine admiration. His face was smooth-shaven with good features: his eyes almost black, restless and full of fire, played an effective part in his conversation, which was delivered with animation, in tolerably correct phrase, and in a clear voice that was not unmusical. For the rest, he was of good manly height, full chested, and of the lithe, wiry build which can defy much exposure, privation and fatigue. Mrs. Taine thought his head too large; but in fact, it was remarkably symmetrical as Mr. Smiles told Hagar, and the appearance of being slightly out of proportion was caused by his thick shock of long wavy hair.

At supper, which was a plain but substantial meal, consisting of ham and eggs, vegetables, the regulation mush and milk, and delicious home-made bread, butter and preserves, the saint ate with unabashed avidity, and an innocent disregard for conventionalities which amused Mr. Smiles, pained Hagar, and literally dumbfounded Mrs. Taine. The doctor seemed as unconscious that anything was wrong as the culprit himself, and the latter, while giving most flattering accounts of the well-being and the rapid progress of his people, jarred the nerves of his hostess by omitting to masticate his food with his mouth closed, and by shoveling up with his knife whatever was placed before him. The old lady was mentally asking herself "what next!" when to her horror the missionary deliberately poured a por-

tion of his coffee into his saucer and drank it from that vessel. If he had stood at zero in her estimation before supper, he certainly sank several degrees below during that repast. His really interesting talk, his good looks, his ineffable nonchalance, were all as nothing to that good old lady in the balance against what she afterwards denounced as his 'barbarous breeding.'

Luckily for Spencer, others of his new acquaintances were not so intolerant, and he repaid their generosity by upwards of an hour's amusement which he supplied by an account of the divine origin of his religion. The theologians politely gave him the floor and offered no criticisms. At nine o'clock Mark Kilbourne arrived, and the party soon afterwards broke up. Mark was very attentive to the Mormon, and presently took him up to James' room. When the clock struck ten, Mr. Smiles, who was left alone with the ladies, said that he could not think of keeping them up any longer, and as he felt no inclination to retire he would take a stroll in the moonlight.

"The truth is, my dear madam," said this sturdy young parson who was as unimpressible as a brick-bat, and was also well aware of the fact, "the unusual excitements of to-day have somewhat upset me."

Shortly afterwards he put on a light overcoat, and lit a fragrant Havana as he went outside.

"Well, Hagar, what do you think of the Mormon?" asked Mrs. Taine.

"He seems a talented fellow, but oh, my! how ignorant! Just think of any sane person believing that story about the golden plates."

"My dear," replied the old lady confidentially, "any person who will eat pie with a knife, is fool enough to believe anything!"

CHAPTER VII.

"—— Oft' what seems
A trifle, a mere nothing, by itself,
In some nice situations turns the scale
Of Fate, and rules the most important actions." —*Thompson.*

The waning moon was climbing the eastern sky, and a zephyr from Lake Erie was playing among the foliage when Mr. Smiles began his solitary promenade on the lawn. Finding the grass coated with hoar-frost, he took to the gravel walk, and soon arrived at the gate. There he paused, and resting his elbows on the top rail of the fence quietly puffed at his cigar and watched the wreaths of smoke as they were wafted down the lane.

The Taine mansion stood back from the road some distance, and the level space between was thickly covered with fruit trees the branches of which were almost bare. Some of the trees along the public road, however, still contained enough leaves to obscure the view even in the daytime, and they now cast a thick shadow along one side, in which, in spite of the bright moonlight, a man might conceal himself with impunity. Mr. Smiles appeared suddenly to become aware of this, and after carefully surveying the avenue leading to the house, he went outside, closed the gates gently after him and passed along in the shadow for some distance as if to make sure that nobody was lying there in ambush. He satisfied himself that all was clear and was going back towards the gate when he heard a horse approaching. He quicky stepped inside and concealed himself behind one of the heavy gate-posts. The horseman advanced at a slow walk, and when opposite the gate drew rein and gazed steadily for a few seconds up the avenue towards Chestnut Grove.

"The best of men?" said Mr. Smiles, showing himself.

"Is number nine," replied the other, wheeling his horse towards where the minister stood. He then dismounted; they shook hands cordially, and walked slowly away together conversing in an undertone.

"I was getting rather uneasy, parson. What's a movin'—hev yer sighted the coon?"

"Yes, I've been as close to him as I am to you, I shook his hand, and I've got things into better shape in three days than I expected in ten. What was impossible last Spring will now be as easy as fooling a wench," said Mr. Smiles, falling into a careless manner to suit his companion. "But how are Delmy and the rest of the boys?"

"Tip top, sah! jest A 1; Jim Delmy is the man to do a job clean. Them Treasury papers you got him at St. Louis has jest made him solid all along. It's true we've been a day late gettin here; but we've got the roads down fine, which is something to the purpose, ain't it? Besides we've all got mounts that can make well on to ninety miles between two days." The speaker was a wiry young Missourian of medium height and slight built. He looked the ideal desperado. His stumpy red beard overgrew a visage in which the small grey eyes shone like two fiery beacons. He kept a huge quid of tobacco moving about from one cheek to the other while listening to what the parson said, and spoke with a peculiar nasal twang. In reply to Mr. Smiles' questions he said that Delmy had decided that no part of the journey they were to perform could be done otherwise than on horseback; that they had a safe and entirely innocent looking camp, and that Delmy was anxious for an interview with the parson.

"But, say, parson;" added No. 9. on his own account, "is there any truth in that air report in the papers about ole Leigh withdrawin' the reward, an' sayin' he'll jest let the young un go to blazes if he likes?"

"Not a word!—if you could'nt tell that was nothing but a Yankee lie, No. 9. I'm ashamed of you."

"Well, that's what Jim says, and I reckon you're both about right."

Mr. Smiles shortly after despatched his friend with an order for Captain Delmy to meet him at the same place at ten o'clock the following evening, by which time he hoped to have a definite plan mapped out; and when the receding clatter of the horse's hoofs had died away, the parson strode leisurely back to the house. Lights were still burning in some of the rooms up stairs,

and he found Mrs. Taine awaiting him in the sitting-room, where she had fallen asleep with a heavy theological volume on her lap. She roused herself with an effort as he entered the room; but he pretended not to notice that Morpheus had interrupted her divinity, and said:—

"Ah, my dear madam! Communing with the holy fathers, as usual?"

"I was reading a little; but I am very tired to-night and should have gone to bed but that I have something to say to you." By this time Mr. Smiles had thrown off his overcoat, and stretched his well-formed person in a comfortable attitude on the old-fashioned lounge.

"Ah, but you are too thoughtful for me, dear Mrs. Taine, I am very sorry."

"You have no occasion to be. My interest in you is more deep and sincere than I have ever felt for any other being, and I can see, as nobody else can, that you are uneasy. You have not, I am afraid, formed a correct estimate of my character." As she said this she took a chair nearer the lounge and placed it so that she might speak in a low voice quite near her companion's ear. "I know what it is," she continued, "you see how partial Dr. Taine is towards the Mormon, and you think Hagar may have a lurking tendency in that direction. Still, such fears are uncomplimentary to me, and prove that you have failed to appreciate the depth of my affection—the strength of my purpose."

Mr. Smiles felt some uncertainty as to the old lady's meaning, but replied blandly:

"No, no, my dear friend, do not imagine such a thing; I need no assurance that I can fully rely upon you."

"You candidly believe that in spite of all opposition from whatever quarter I will secure the result you desire?" she asked with singular eagerness.

"Indeed, yes!" he exclaimed, in a manner to convince her. "I am so far satisfied of this that I am ready to adopt a course which is rarely a safe one as this world goes. I am going to trust wholly to your friendship, and leave nothing to depend upon my own poor merit." The young minister was half expecting a declaration of

undying love from the old lady herself; he had known of such cases, and was prepared to make the best of the dilemma; but she merely passed her hand gently along his forehead, and settled back in her chair with a deep sigh.

"But, speaking of the Mormon," said he, in a voice as nicely modulated as that of a clever actor, "do you know I almost feel that he has a prior claim to the lovely girl he rendered such gallant service? I don't know but I ought to give up the contest in his favor."

"No, that you shall not! I know your modest and generous nature, but in this case, at least, it shall not avail you to your own irreparable loss. You fell in love with Hagar when you met her last spring. I knew it perfectly well. This circumstance has opened up a future for me as well as for you, if you are but steadfast to your purpose. The small portion of your society which I should enjoy as an elder sister—or—"(she found it necessary to clear her throat)—"or as a mother, if you prefer it, would amply repay me for all that I can do to promote your interests and happiness, and to place you in a position of immediate independence."

He attempted to say something by way of gratitude, but she would not be interrupted until she had stated her determination to make him the heir to all she possessed.

"But, it is too much—too much, my dear madam. How can I ever accept so great, and so undeserved—"

"Please allow me to finish what I have to say, for nothing can turn me from my purpose. My property is all in my own name and right, and I am determined that it shall not go to my husband's family. Your kin to me is so far only spiritual, which I deem the best of kin—you alone can inherit from me. All this and more I have planned, and the plan must be carried out."

Mr. Smiles at that moment felt a doubt as to the old lady's sanity.

"There is a mystery about Miss Hagar's parentage of which you promised to inform me. Knowing the facts shall not alter my determination to abide by your wishes, for I do not believe that a man can devote himself too singly and entirely to so true a friend." He reverently took her hand and pressed it to his lips.

Affecting a momentary confusion, she replied:—"On the faith of that promise I will tell you all I know about this strange case." She drew her chair a little nearer, and after a glance around the room to make sure that they were quite alone, continued in a voice that was little louder than a whisper:

"When I married Nathan Taine his former wife had been dead about three years, and I found in his house, (a small place a mile beyond here) his son James, and this girl, a babe only a few months old. She was represented to me as a foundling who had been taken in by Dr. Taine during my engagement to him, but while I was away visiting friends in Boston. My husband seemed very reticent about her, but at last I obtained the following account from a servant girl who was then employed on the place, and who has since married and gone out west. Early one morning, she said, the gardener was going about his work when he heard a baby crying near a deep pond at the farther end of the orchard. Running to the spot he found the tiny thing bundled up in a thick shawl, lying under a tree, and took it at once to the house. As an elderly woman who then kept the doctor's house was unwrapping it, this card fell on the floor." She handed him a square bit of cardboard, yellow with age, but otherwise in a good state of preservation. The writing on it was perfectly clear and distinct, but was the work of a cramped and inexperienced hand. He read it audibly:

"I could not murder her as I do myself. May her life not be cursed as her mother's was. Name her Hagar, the forsaken one—it may be fortunate—mine was Hope, and brought me only misery. God pity us!"

"How strange, how pitiful!" exclaimed the parson with a real touch of sympathy in his voice. "But was the poor mother never found?"

"No:—it is supposed she drowned herself in the pond, and that her body is to this day concealed in some of its recesses; for it is very deep, and the sides and bed are composed of ledges and broken shelves of lime-stone. I sometimes almost love the girl myself when I think of that dreary episode," added Mrs. Taine, raising her handkerchief to her eyes.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was shortly before noon on the fairest of autumn days when Mr. Smiles rode into the quiet village of Newberg, and the first sight that attracted his attention was a squad of some 200 recruits who were performing military evolutions in the vacant square adjoining the small church and school-house. The fact that these smooth-faced boys were being trained to kill and be killed, did not interest him in the least, for his mind was preoccupied with the expected meeting with Captain Leigh, and more particularly with the anticipation of seeing the young officer's wife, who, he had no doubt, was formerly an intimate acquaintance of his own.

"She will not know me," he reflected as he slowly approached the square, "for I saw her last in '54, and am greatly changed—but, if she should, she dare not speak."

Philip had recognized the parson as he drew near, and stepped out to greet him. They shook hands and Mr. Smiles said in his pleasant style:

"As I was passing this way I thought I would give myself the pleasure of a call at your house, Captain Leigh; but I fear you are too much occupied?"

"No, not at all," replied Philip, cordialy, "these are two companies that have been raised by private enterprise, and I have been inspecting them before sending them forward for enrollment in the Federal armies. If you will wait one moment I'll show you where I live."

Smiles dismounted and stood stroking the arched neck of his horse while the Captain gave his final directions to the volunteer officers who presently formed their companies in marching order and took the road back to Cleveland. Philip then rejoined him, and they walked together down a grassy lane to the left of the school-house.

"How did you leave the invalid?" asked Captain Leigh.

"He is getting along very well indeed."

"And is all this drama in the newspapers quite true, then? I have been curious to ask James about it."

"Yes, I believe so," replied Mr. Smiles. "We now have the young Mormon at Chestnut Grove, and a prejudiced observer might be pardoned for expressing his opinion that in this case Heaven had selected a curious instrument for its miracles." The minister spoke satirically, and Philip smiled at the conceit. "It now appears that he wants to marry Miss Hagar," he added.

"It is said that there is another aspirant for Hagar's hand. Of course you have heard that also?" asked Philip.

"No, I can't say that I have; but I should pity any Christian who entered such a contest against a Mormon and came off second best."

"Well," replied Captain Leigh, rather pensively, "I think Miss Taine a fine young woman, and I hope a bright and happy future is in store for her—such a future as could not be found in a Mormon harem."

They had now reached a gate in a whitewashed picket-fence and Mr. Smiles made mental observation of the salient features of the locality for future use. The house was a one story frame cottage built in a neat style, and like most residences is the village, was ensconced amidst an orchard of fruit trees well back from the street. A few hardy flowers were still in blossom in the beds beside the gravel walk, and a portion of the porch was festooned by a graceful creeper trained upon a wicker trellis. Mr. Smiles also noted, with satisfaction that there was not a house on the opposite side of the street, and that the nearest neighbor was distant a good stone's throw. The Captain's boy was seen hurrying towards them from the barn-yard gate which was a little further along, and they paused until he came and took charge of Mr. Smiles' horse. They were discussing the Mormon as they approached the house, but dropped the subject instanter when they met Mrs. Leigh face to face at the cottage door. Josephine was surprised to see the fashionabe stranger. Philip introduced Mr. Smiles as the gentleman he had met the other evening at Dr. Taine's, and she received him with that frank and gracious courtesy so characteristic of Western women, which places the stranger at once in a comfortable and easy frame of mind. Mr. Smiles was not less self-possessed, and while indulging in such po-

lite common-places as he thought suitable from a young and handsome bachelor minister, he recognized Mrs. Leigh as the former Miss Josephine La Salle whose acquaintance he had made in the South many years before.

She was beautiful when he had first met her, but he was amazed by the spell which her present charms threw over him. With a quick glance he surveyed her: Her exquisite form was lithe as a leopard's; her complexion ideally fair and enhanced by a sentiment of rose-tint like a blush on a lily, if such could be. Her wavy tresses clustered about a brow and head as perfect as a Greek statue.

"She was then the bud not fully blown," thought Mr. Smiles,—"She is now the perfect flower."

For a time he let the conversation drift along as it would, all the while keeping a secret watch on Josephine to note if she betrayed the faintest sign of recognition. Puzzled and interested by her sweet unconsciousness as she worked away at her embroidery, he finally mentioned the intended visit of Mrs. Taine and Hagar, and turned a neat compliment regarding the latter.

"I have always been very fond of Hagar and used to see her quite frequently in Cleveland; but she has only called once since we moved from the city," said Mrs. Leigh.

"Mrs. Taine, has, I believe," said Mr. Smiles, judiciously, "kept in force a system of restraint (with only kind intentions I am sure, but not the less erroneously), which I have advised her to abandon. She is a kind and good woman, but is very sensitive and somewhat wanting in tact. This visit, I hope, may prove the beginning of a series, for I am sure she will relish social intercourse if she will only take the trouble to acquire a taste for it. And to her adopted daughter, as I have strongly represented, it is indispensable. Too much seclusion I believe to be detrimental to the young."

"You might say fatal, I think," replied Captain Leigh. "Boys and girls who are educated in walled convents do not as a rule develop anything like the independence and individuality which characterize those who receive their early training in public schools and

colleges. This is a well known fact and I consider that it is entirely due to the innate viciousness of the former system. Still, some people are silly enough to adopt it in their own homes, and its effects are usually disastrous. Speaking of Miss Taine: she seems to be a decidedly bright young girl."

"She is intelligent," replied the minister. "I believe she would learn anything under favorable conditions. I find her unusually quick. For instance, the other evening I undertook to show her the moves in chess, and she not only mastered them in a few minutes, but was enable to play them correctly in a trial game the same evening. She shows facility in whatever she attempts, even in music, and she really deserves better opportunities than she enjoys here."

Mr. Smiles was talking principally for effect. But his conversation was none the less interesting on that account for the simple reason that his auditors had not the least suspicion that such was the case. To them he was only what he appeared. Philip indeed, had long harbored a lurking prejudice against parsons in general, but had tacitly exempted his present visitor on account of having met him at the house of Dr. Taine, whom he held in the highest esteem.

"Are you making a long stay in Ohio, Mr. Smiles?" asked Captain Leigh.

"No —that is, I think not. I am a kind of courier in my profession, of inferior rank and therefore subject to orders. As you remarked the other evening, 'I only know the alphabet.' But I like this field of labor much, and only wish my stay here might be regulated by my own will. If I could get a furlough from this duty I should enlist as a chaplain," he concluded, with the innocent air of a young priest in the first stage above his novitiate.

"I should think this the more pleasant post," replied Philip. "You would find army work a very different matter."

"I am aware of it, my dear sir; but do you suppose that the soldier of the Cross only studies his ease?" Mr. Smiles spoke in a tone of mild, courteous reprimand. "I might say the same to you, Captain Leigh," he continued with a friendly smile. "A place by this bright

and peaceful fireside is far more desirable than in the front of battle where the earth and all upon it is rent by shot and shell; and yet, I'll warrant, you would choose the latter. Why then should not I? Simply because I have no power to choose, since, like any other soldier, I must either obey orders or dishonor myself by deser tion." He then proceeded to express his opinion of the singular display of inconsistency in religious matters which was the inevitable result of war: the prayers of each blood-drenched contestant imploring victory from the same God; the irony of men's creeds and pretended beliefs, which were supposed to unite them in strong bonds of fellowship, and proved to be but ropes of sand the moment the sword was drawn; the young and brave flying to the ranks of both sides to battle for the right!

"It is," he said, with almost tearful solemnity, "a sad and awful spectacle that we have presented to us this moment, the death conflict of Cain and Abel spreading its blight upon a million hearthstones! I often cry in agony of spirit: Where and how will it all end?"

He spoke with such well-feigned emotion that the tears came to Mrs. Leigh's eyes, and a strange flush passed across Philip's cheek leaving him pale and serious. There was a brief pause, which Philip interrupted by saying quietly, though with a flash in his dark eyes that did not escape the minister:—

"There should be no doubt in our minds as to that! It can only end by the utter collapse of the Rebel cause. No true American can think of any other end than this!"

"Of course, we all hope for that result," said Mr. Smiles, thoughtfully, "but we cannot lose sight of the dreadful carnage and suffering, and the almost fatal blow to Morality which must intervene. I did not mean, where would the political contest cease, for I am as certain as to that as a man can be of anything. But I mean, where will end these shocking evils? For their effects will be felt long after the roar of cannon and the rattle of musketry have ceased, and after the fields and valleys that have drunk the blood of thousands have outgrown the marks of the fray, and returned to more than their pristine beauty."

Mr. Smiles had easily accomplished his purpose: he was now regarded by Captain Leigh and his wife as a good young parson of no mean ability, whose heart and sympathy were obviously in the right place. The young officer thought that his abstenance from the offensive sanctimoniousness that was then too common among minor theologians, was to be ascribed to his experience of the world and his evident intelligence; and he found himself taking a decided interest in Mr. Smiles despite his trade.

"Do you expect soon to be ordered to the front, Captain Leigh?" asked the minister.

"Yes—but the time is uncertain." He laid his finger on his lips as a signal to drop the subject, but it was too late: Josephine raised her eyes to his with a look of pain, and found it necessary to withdraw to hide her tears from the stranger. She already felt the vivid apprehension that oppresses the loving wife of a soldier in time of war; but it was well for her that she had no foretaste of the bitter draught that her fate held in reserve for her.

"You must excuse my wife, Mr. Smiles," said Philip, rather sadly—"she is like most women, very skeptical about the honor to be won at the cannon's mouth when her husband is concerned. As to your question: I have requested to be relieved from my present duties and ordered to the front, but of course, I cannot say when my wish will be gratified. If it depends on political influence I am afraid I shall have to remain here."

"Yes we have become so habituated to appointing men to office because of political influence, and the custom has thus far played so important a part in the appointments of officers for the present army that I should not be surprised if a successful manipulator of ward politics with qualifications for a commissary clerk, will become a general in the Union army while, West Pointers who have no 'political influence,' remain lieutenants and captains. I have sometimes thought that if the question of appointing some worthy gentleman to the post of arch angel were brought before the Senate, the first and last difficulty would be the candidate's 'political influence'" Smiles said this with enough facetiousness to make Philip laugh, and then turning to him

asked rather abruptly if he played chess. Captain Leigh replied that he knew the rudiments of the game but could hardly be called a player.

"It is the only game I care for," answered Mr. Smiles, "I wish we might find an opportunity to have a bout. It should be a favorite with those of the military profession, for besides being a genial and engrossing pleasure in the camp, it suggests endless tactical and strategical problems, and in its miniature ramifications may contain the outlines of a great battle."

"I am myself a tolerably enthusiastic amateur whose love for the game is far greater than his skill. I have not played for some time, but perhaps we can have a quiet contest on the mimic field when you come here with the Taines."

"Nothing could gratify me more," said Mr. Smiles, rising. "Of course you will give me some advantage—a castle, for instance?"

"We shall see about that after the first game," replied Philip. "But you are not going? It is our dinner-time—you must stay and dine with us, unless you have a prior engagement with some of your flock."

Smiles made an excuse, saying that although he had no special engagement he must make a number of calls during the afternoon and could scarcely spare the time. While he was hesitating, Mrs. Leigh came back, and he yielded readily to her cordial invitation. As they were passing to the dining room he eased his tender conscience by remarking with a slight shrug of the shoulders, which he often employed to indicate a pleasant resignation to the inevitable:

"Well, I must confess, that the charm of Western hospitality is irresistible!"

In spite of studied precautions on Philip's part, the conversation, which ran along on minor topics for a while, was brought back to the subject of the war by his own comment on an item of news contained in the morning's paper. For a time, the conduct of battles and the merits of officers both at Washington and in the field, were freely discussed, and Mr. Smiles seized the opportunity to praise the vast ability shown by some of the Southern generals and to lament that such talent should have taken the wrong side. He was well

aware that Philip was not the man to like flattery, but could not resist the temptation to strike a chord which he knew would thrill the military heart—

"By the way, Captain Leigh," he said, "there is no doubt in my mind that if you had cast your lot with your native section you would have been in the command of a division now instead of a company."

"Mr. Smiles, I would rather be a private for my country, than a general against her!"

Soon after dinner Mr. Smiles took his leave, and promised to come next day with his friends at Chestnut Grove if he could possibly allow himself the leisure. As he rode slowly along through the village, his thoughts were occupied with Mrs. Leigh:—

"She did not know me—but that's no wonder, since it is more than seven years, and I have undergone a complete metamorphosis; she has, meanwhile, become a paragon. I must see her again after Leigh's exit."

As he proceeded to the eastward for the purpose of making a careful survey of the town, he was alternately hilarious and downcast, his philosophical spirit and sang-froid, having for the moment deserted him. While he felt assured of gaining the desperate game he was playing by a trifling ruse he had planned, it seemed, at the moment to call for none of the finer work of which he knew himself capable. This was the only fault he found with his attitude toward Captain Leigh. He felt no qualm of conscience for the plot he was laying, but only a conceited notion that the enterprize was not worthy of his subtle mind. He soon cajoled his pride into taking a better view of his task, however, when he reviewed the situation. Was not the object of his quest leep in the enemy's country, surrounded by troops, and possibly, well on his guard? The chances which these reflections suggested heightened the flavor of his undertaking, and he remembered that one of his present duties was to ascertain if a guard was stationed at night either in the town or the Captain's house. He must visit the camp of his accomplices at once to inform them of the favorable state of their project, and return that very night to reconnoitre Newberg. He stopped and made a hurried entry in his note-book, then taking the first turning to the southward trotted away

at a lively pace. The lane in which he found himself was grass-grown from fence to fence and it was evident that very little traffic passed that way. But it was a pleasant route along which the farm-houses were far apart, and he was well aware that it led into a road by which he could reach Delmy's rendezvous.

He had gone probably two miles when he saw a horseman coming in the opposite direction, and was amazed as he approached to find that it was Delmy himself dressed precisely like an Ohio farmer. The outlaw was scarcely less surprised than his chief.

"Well Cap, what's the meaning of this?" asked Smiles, impatiently.

"Don't give me any of yer airs, parson, if yer please," replied Delmy, insolently, "I'm under yer orders, I know, and I obeyed ye better'n any man I ever see, but I reckon I'v got something to say, yer know, and I've made up my mind to git the lay of the land."

"Very well, there's my hand," said Smiles, in a conciliatory tone, "it's good luck that has brought us together at this moment, so we won't quarrel."

"Good luck! well, I'm glad to hear it, fur I was gittin' rather down at the mouth. But what do you mean, parson?" He spoke in a surly manner, and gave Smiles' hand a languid shake.

"Why, I've caught our man already—I dined with him at noon. As No. 9 would say, 'the 'possum's treed.'"

"Come now, parson, what yer givin' us?" asked Delmy, opening his bleared eyes as wide as he could, and biting a chunk from a black plug of tobacco.

"The simple truth," said Smiles, bringing his hand down on Delmy's back with smarting emphasis. He gave him a full account of what he had done, and of his plans so far as developed, and then ordered him back to camp with all speed and caution to cheer up his men and get them in readiness.

"If I find that armed guards are stationed in the town we may have to wait a few days; but I now think we are all right for to-morrow night."

"Well, look yer, parson,—there's one thing I want to mention before this business goes any further; I don't see no use in tryin' to tote a live man into Kentucky when we kin just as well kill him off and save our bacon —besides the swag bein' iest the same."

"I'm sorry to hear you talk that way, Delmy; if you had seen old man Leigh when he was talking of how his son went back on him you wouldn't think of killing the boy; why he's his only child, and what he wants is to put him under lock and key to keep him from fighting for the North. But that's not all: we think when we once get him where proper influences can be brought to bear, he will change his mind and take a command in our army. Those who know him best say he'll make as good a general as Jackson; so you see he's too valuable a man to kill, and we are not a band of assassins, anyhow."

Delmy assented doggedly, but when Smiles had sent him to camp and turned back himself to the eastward, he reflected that his accomplice was a man who would not scruple to despatch his prisoner if his own safety seemed to require it.

The night was dark and chilly; but neither of these conditions seemed to make any impression upon him. The stars gave sufficient light to enable him to find his way, and nature had treated him so kindly with gifts of vitality as well as temper, that he might pride himself on being equally indifferent to either heat or cold. He trotted leisurely along, to all appearance no more ruffled, anxious or vigilant than some innocent circuit-rider on his home stretch. He struck the road passing through the central part of Newberg and continued into the village at the same pace he had been traveling. Now and then a snarling cur would fly from under a fence, and dashing into the middle of the road, tear its throat with shrill barking; and a few persons more owlish than the rest of the village were met and passed with a friendly "good night." When he reached the square, he heard the village singing class chanting their closing anthem in the school-house, only a stone's throw from Captain Leigh's. But there was nothing to indicate the presence of a military guard, or even of civil police. However, to make assurance doubly sure, he checked his horse to a slow walk and passed along the street in front of the Leigh cottage. It was probable, he thought, that the young southerner might have a body guard there at night as a precaution. A careful survey soon convinced him that such was

not the case. Nobody was there except Leigh and his wife whom he saw through a half open shutter, sitting at a table reading.

Entirely satisfied with the result of his investigations, he took his bearings for Chestnut Grove, and reached the cross-roads where he had instructed Delmy to meet him for final orders, Delmy was pleased with the plainness and simplicity of his directions and said he had no doubt of their complete success in capturing Leigh the next night, providing a guard was not placed in the meantime. Before dismissing him, Smiles handed the desperado a diagram he had drawn of the Leigh cottage and vicinity, and ordered him to ride through the town early next day in his farmer's suit to make himself familiar with the place. Everything being arranged so far as was possible until the decisive moment, the accomplished rebel agent parted from his lieutenant with the following injunction:—

"You must ignore me entirely; for, if I can remain here for a time unsuspected, I will be able to help you in your flight, and to reward you hereafter."

Delmy listened attentively to his chief's words, and signified his assent. His hard visage betrayed no sign of interest or enthusiasm, but his small, sharp eyes, set deep amid crow-feet, and seared wrinkles that were born of vice rather that age, had a determined, and ferocious look in them.

A few moments later, the Rev. Mr. Smiles was seated in the cosy dining room at Chestnut Grove in company with Mrs. Taine, who had waited up to see that he should not go to bed hungry after an entire day spent in arduous missionary labor. It is a strange fact that Mrs. Taine had never thought any other man worthy of such indulgence.

CHAPTER IX.

Hagar had studiously avoided James since the incident of Mr. Smiles' proposal, and the invalid had been turned over to the care of Maria whose feminine insight discerned his uneasiness concerning the engagement. Maria belonged to that respectable class of persons who are emphatically styled "helps" rather than "servants." At this period to most well-to-do people in the West there was no medium between a "help" and a slave. Their cooks, and housemaids and seamstresses were frequently the daughters of their poorer neighbors, and were treated more like humble members of the family than as menials. Maria had been with the Taines a number of years in her present capacity, and had acquired certain privileges and immunities, amongst which was a freedom of speech and an irritating habit of interference which had become not only inveterate but ineradicable.

Whenever she came to James' room she found occasion to bring him some scrap of information about what was going on in the house. At supper time she gave an account of Mr. Spencer's attempt to make a Mormon of her. "But I'm not so easily caught," she said, "for I should judge by his own account of it, that the Mormon Kingdom, which he calls the "Kingdom of God" (the sinner!) must be a very queer place."

At breakfast next morning it was some gossip about Mrs. Taine's devotion to Mr. Smiles, and how the latter had promised after his marriage with Hagar, to let her go and live with them in Boston. But in spite of her admiration, she discerned that while the good young parson kept one eye on Hagar, he was fixing the other as ardently on Mrs. Taine's money bags. But when she came up with his dinner on the day following Mr. Smiles' missionary tour, she appeared so serious that James could not help asking her what had happened. She gave him a long and most circumstantial account, to the effect that Mrs. Taine's object in visiting Newberg, was to

have Mr. Smiles and Hagar quietly married. Though she declared that she was positive such was the case, James, who was much moved by the news, urged her to enquire more closely and bring him word again.

Meanwhile Hagar was disturbed both by Mr. Smiles and by the Mormon. Her position had been a very trying one for the past few days. She had endeavored to do what she could to entertain Spencer, but he realized the effort she was making and could not fail to note the alternate confusion and abstraction of her bearing towards him. It was perfectly clear to him that, whether she was performing some of his favorite selections on the piano or teaching him croquet, she was moved by a certain sense of duty. As he firmly believed that not his person but his garb as a Mormon, offended her, his calling grew more sacred to him, and he endured whatever seemed to his sensitive nature like a slight, with a kind of bitterness that in his way of thinking, amounted to a species of triumph.

During Mr. Smiles' absence he had taken the occasion to talk very impressively to her concerning the present joy and future glory of the Latter-day-saints, and finding that she listened with attention, he finally ventured to exclaim as gently as the sincere utterance of his heart would permit:

"Ah, Miss Taine, I would to God you were one of us!" He did not dare to hope that anything he could say would cause her to break with Mr. Smiles, but he would have given a large share of his interest in "the King dom" to have discovered even the slightest defection to work upon.

"Why so?"—she asked, smiling.

"For your own good, wholly," he replied, "That you might know the true gospel."

"But, Mr. Spencer," she said, looking him steadily in the eyes, "I could not be one of you. I have heard nothing but evil of your religion ever since I can remember, and I do not believe that your prophet was a good prophet, or that your church is a good church. Your revelations, those in the book you lent me, are so funny I could only laugh at them. Ma'am Taine says it's blasphemy, and I really think it is. I don't want to hurt your feelings Mr. Spencer, I would prefer to keep

my thoughts to myself : I like you because you are brave and good, but I don't like your religion. We can always be friends, though, without speaking of that, can we not? For I don't think you can convert me to your church, and I'm sure nobody could turn you from it."

"So be it, Miss Taine," he replied abruptly. "I shall make no attempt to force my principles upon you. To me they are as meat and drink, and it is charity, not malice, that prompts me to offer them to foes as well as friends."

Having found her to be a confirmed scoffer, and despairing of any favorable results in the line of his duty at Chestnut Grove, he concluded that the best thing he could do was to take up the thread of his labors where he had dropped it in Cleveland, and endeavor to banish this attractive little skeptic from his thoughts. He must not permit any romantic notions to distract his higher reflections; indeed, he had pledged himself not to do so : whatever he might have done in the endeavor to win the young girl's heart if she had been a member of his church, nothing could justify him, he thought, in making a further effort under existing circumstances. It was a pity that such a beautiful and clever girl should be damned, but he had done his best to save her and must now leave her to her fate.

It was arranged that he should go to Cleveland with Dr. Taine next morning, and after saying good bye to Mrs. Taine, he went up to have a parting word with James.

"I feel that I can never repay the debt I owe you," said James, at last, "and I sincerely trust that, however far we may be driven apart on the ocean of life, we shall keep track of each other. For my part, I shall be sorry not to know where and how you are, for I feel that I have a life interest in you, and you in me."

"You are very polite, Mr. Taine; but there can be nothing in common between us unless we are brothers in the gospel of the last days. Though you ignore the importance of this matter, I cannot do so. You have rejected my message, and thereby you reject me also." Thus spoke the Mormon with the egotistic bigotry which has always characterized his sect. James' tongue was still, because he could not speak without resenting such

narrowness, and was reluctant to offend or pain his benefactor. The Elder had wheeled about as if intending to depart, but he turned round to add:

"When I rushed into that burning house and helped you from a perilous position it was not you I sought, but a woman, a bright young girl, whose face I saw only for a second through the flames. Had I saved her she would have been converted to my faith, and become the means, as female converts always are, of leading others to the truth. To you my devotion has no significance beyond an act of daring; to me it means, and to her it would have meant, a great deal more. No, I shall not come here again unless you wish to cast your lot with the people of God whom I represent."

By this time James' momentary annoyance had been changed to amusement, and he said, with a smile:—

"Even if you had asked me when I was wedged in by those bricks and timbers if I would believe your doctrines or perish where I lay, I think I should have chosen the latter fate, for it would be easier for me to sacrifice my life than wilfully stultify my reason. I would rather run the risk of losing my soul by doubting a doubtful religion than to have the certainty of losing my manhood by pretending to believe it. All men cannot agree upon one common belief; they must have a variety of convictions as well as a diversity of tastes, talents, employments. This very difference between men is one of the most useful and beneficent characteristics of the human family. If we were all alike, life would be a stagnant pool, a mere Hades of monotony. We want unity of thought and of action in the direction of Justice, of Love, and of Truth; but even if such a state were attainable we should never seek for uniformity of worship, of belief, of pursuit any more than of personal appearance. The boundless variety characterizing Nature both animate and inanimate, no doubt has a significance as wide as Creation itself. But in one respect diversity of opinion has a meaning and an intention which is perfectly clear: As to things not absolutely proved it supplies our chief hope of attaining to correct views. But I will not weary you with argument. Without regard to your creed or belief I wanted to count you as a friend. You reject my proffered

friendship because I have not conformed to your faith. I trust you will think better of it. If not I shall hope that at some future time we may meet where men base their relations to each other on manhood and honor, not so capricious a thing as creed." Though he made his meaning clear there was blended with his candor a fair proportion of delicacy.

"If we meet at the bar of another world, Mr. Taine, we shall see who is right," replied the Mormon, palpably displeased. Maria tapped on the door to say Dr. Taine was ready to start for the city. The missionary was thankful for the interruption, and, taking a hurried leave set off for the scene of his labors.

Meantime James had sent for Hagar. In a few moments she appeared, gave her hand, and took a chair near the bed.

"You sent for me, James?" she asked softly. She withdrew her hand and sat with her eyes downcast, listlessly twirling a bit of crumpled paper which she had carried with her.

"Yes, Hagar,—it seems I must send for you if I wish to see you at all—you have stayed away, and I have missed you. But to-day I heard something from Maria—which—"

"Maria!" she exclaimed, interrupting him, "do you have her bring you tales about me?"

"When so important a step as your marriage is reported and you do not tell me of it yourself——"

"My marriage!" she said, and followed the words with a derisive laugh which James knew to be ungenuine and forced. "But what has Maria been saying about my marriage?"

"Why, that it is to take place to-day."

Though Hagar laughed again she had turned pale.

"But that is not true," she uttered nervously.

James grieved to think she could deceive him, but was unable to reconcile with her denial her agitated and abashed demeanor.

"You are not," he said, gently, still hoping in the midst of doubt. "You are not going to Newberg to-day to be married to this Mr. Smiles?"

Hagar, whose eyes had been hidden by her drooping lids, now looked up with astonishment; for a moment

she was too much dazed to reply; but she finally said in an undecided way:—

"Not that I know of." Again her eyes fell.

She paused, and James waited anxiously. She went on crumpling the bit of paper, which he then noticed for the first time. Presently the mist of apprehension vanished from her face, and looking up with her natural frankness:—

"We are going to Newberg this afternoon," she said, "but I have heard nothing—nobody has said a word about getting married—unless that is the meaning of this note which I found under my door when I got up this morning. It is from Mr. Smiles, but I have not answered it nor told him I received it." She unfolded the note as she spoke and seemed relieved by her confession. After adding that the contents had made her very unhappy and that she had been trying all day to make up her mind to show it to either Ma'am Taine or him, she handed it to James. He perused it in silence: It was an exquisitely worded bit of romance in which the pious young minister proposed a secret marriage and an elopement for that very day in connection with their visit to the Leighs. It was signed only with his initials "B. T. S."

"You say you have not answered it, Hagar?"

"No, not yet."

"But you have decided what your answer is to be?"

"Yes, I shall refuse: for I know it would make Father Taine unhappy if I should do such a thing."

"You are right, Hagar, it would make us all miserable,—and none more so, I fear, than yourself. But do you love Mr. Smiles?"

"Of course I do," she replied, coyly, "He is so intelligent, and so superior to other men I have met, that I cannot help feeling that his attention does me honor. And he is such a delightful companion; his voice reminds me of the music he plays, varying with every mood. But, I don't know why I am talking like this to you, James!" she exclaimed, as if regretting her confidence—"I was foolish to answer your questions; perhaps you were rude to ask them."

"I trust not," James replied, calmly, "Even a cousin might, I think, be pardoned for taking so much liberty: and am I not your brother? Well, it is clear that

you love him .... I wish it were as certain that he loves you as purely and unselfishly."

"I am sure he does!—but have you any reason to think otherwise?"

"No," answered James, reluctantly.

Hagar found Mr. Smiles smoking his cigar in the porch; and, after rallying him for sending her a letter via the door sill, said candidly that she could not think of doing what he proposed because it seemed so unjust to Dr. Taine. He hesitated an instant and looked at her with peculiar interest; then, instead of exhibiting the slightest symptom of surprise or disappointment, he smiled benignantly, raised her soft hand to his lips, and said with supreme gentleness:—

"As you prefer, my darling: your will is my law in all that concerns us."

Hagar was melted, and felt regretful that she had opposed him. Her ideas about marriage, whether conventional or with an elopement in the programme were innocently vague. Though she had read a few romances in which oppressed young lovers were put to heartrending shifts she had very little of mere romance in her nature. She was rather apt to ask the reason why, and when that is done, there is an end of fantasy.

At three o'clock Dan drove the old fashioned Clarence up to the door, with the windows all open, and everything looking bright and shipshape. They had to wait some time for Mrs. Taine, but the delay was sufficiently explained when she finally arrived on the porch, by her elaborate preparation.

"I have not done such a thing as this for years," she remarked, with more than her usual fussiness, as she raised the enormous flounces of her purple silk dress to get into the carriage—"and I should not do it now for any one in the world except you, Mr. Smiles."

"You are really too kind, my dear Mrs. Taine, but you will let our dear Hagar share the compliment with me, I am sure." By this time he had assisted the purple silk and crinoline, the small parasol, and "dear Mrs. Taine," into the carriage, where they fully occupied the back seat.

"The idea," she continued in the tone of her former remark, the idea of my going to call on that proud,

unchristian woman, who has so long ignored me! First she was a Catholic, and now I believe she's an infidel; and I to call on her! Why, Mr. Smiles, it seems quite incredible. But I'm a changed woman since I have known you, and I have no doubt changed for the better."

Mr. Smiles was in one of his most delightful moods, and the afternoon was perfect, as they drove along the autumn-tinted lanes. Hagar evinced a childish delight in the excursion, regarding it as a foretaste of the freedom she should enjoy when she became the wife of this wonderful man, and had a house of her own. The dream enchanted her, and as they drew up at the gate of the Leigh cottage she thought it a miniature paradise. But just before their arrival there was a scene there which would seem to prove that the fairest Eden has its serpent.

Mark Kilbourne had come out from Cleveland in the morning to urge Captain Leigh to make a statement to the General to procure protection against the danger of which he had been warned. But as Philip had received a notice by courier that his request to be sent to the front should be complied with in a few days, he positively refused to have the matter so much as hinted at to the authorities. He appeared to be taciturn and harassed, so Mark had quitted him for a time and gone to visit friends in the village. Philip became more gloomy after his morning's work on the parade ground, and so terrified his wife by his frantic aspect in the afternoon, that she had retired to her room in tears.

Left alone, Captain Leigh paced up and down the room livid and trembling. He clasped his hands together wildly like an actor in a stage passion, then knocked one against the other until the bones cracked again, or flouted them through his hair. As he walked he muttered fiercely:

"Is she wanton or am I mad?....Her betrayer—if he was betrayer and not accomplice—was a priest dubbed holy...May hell scorch such holies!...I must watch her—watch her: I think she blushed when that sleek hypocrite in black did bland homage to her beauty. They say a girl who is once undone can never be trusted—the taste of sin is like a leaven to their natures. That is why by the Jewish law the daughter who fell

was put to death. And Desdemona's father said: 'Look to her Moor, have a quick eye to see, she has deceived her father, and may thee!' Oh, God! what a thought! She that I love better than my life. Can vileness seem so chaste? Doubt is here like a dagger puncturing my heart; I must go hence and drown these voices in the roar of battle where some swift messenger may bring me peace...."

At this moment Mark entered to tell him of the Taine's arrival at the gate. Philip begged him to receive them in his stead, and plunged through a doorway out of sight.

When supper was over and they all reassembled in the sitting room, Mark reminded them of the village concert which was to be given at the school house for the benefit of the Sanitary Commission's funds. Mrs. Leigh was anxious to go, but submitted the matter to Mrs. Taine who said that she considered it a duty to support every effort made for the benefit of our wounded soldiers. Mr. Smiles then insisted upon buying the tickets, including one for himself, but protested that he would rather stay and have a game of chess, if Captain Leigh was agreeable.

"Oh, I don't mind a game, if you desire it," replied Philip, who had regained the outward aspect of composure. "Mark, you go with the ladies to the concert, and we will join you shortly. Mr. Smiles will soon weary of my play."

The ladies and their escort presently leaving, the chess-players lighted their cigars and prepared their pieces for the contest. Odds were neither given nor taken. Mr. Smiles, having the 'play,' opened with the King's Gambit. When an hour had elapsed the issue of the game was still in doubt, though the minister had the advantage by a knight, and a strong position for attack and defence. Silence had fallen: an intense eagerness showed on the face of Leigh, while the only signs of mental strain in Smiles were swollen veins and a purple flush across his forehead. By a superb series of six or eight moves, military discipline now asserted its superiority over clerical astuteness, the minister's game being completely compromised. He felt his discomfiture keenly, and by a skillful manoeuvre saved himself from total defeat by forcing a drawn game upon his antagonist.

Smiles glanced at his watch and asked Philip if they should play a second game. Philip declined, and brought his own and Mr. Smiles' hat and overcoat. He put on his own, and walked toward Smiles who stood before the window striking two or three matches in the endeavor to light his cigar.

"Ah! at last," said Smiles, "after burning my finger to the bone." As he thanked Philip for helping him on with his Chesterfield, three men with masks on their faces and arms in their hands rushed into the room, extinguished the lamps and threw themselves on Leigh.... A fierce struggle in the darkness, the crash of a chair falling and a body felled: and silence broken by a single moan expiring in a denser silence. The desperadoes had secured their prize, and Smiles lay in a dead faint, struck down by a chair which Leigh had whirled at hazard, and which, unknown to himself, had wounded his most inveterate enemy.

CHAPTER X.

By daylight next morning the country for miles around was aroused and in arms. The members of Captain Leigh's company had assembled at Newberg and started out in parties under lieutenants and sergeants in search of the trail of the marauders.

For the first time since the fall of Sumter the quiet hamlets of northern Ohio were thrilled with patriotic zeal as if their very hearthstones were assailed by the rebel horde. The Cleveland papers contained a full account of the affair, which Mark reported, and a glowing telegram was dispatched by the Associated Press to all parts of the country. It seemed impossible that the band of Delmy would be able to elude their pursuers. But as days went by without any tidings, though the State and National authorities were exerting every influence at their command, hope waned, and in the heart of Captain Leigh's young wife became transmuted to despair. Ten days after the abduction, Mark Kilbourne was in Cincinnati, having ridden on horse-back the entire distance. He and his party had crossed the trail of the fugitives at two different points; but wherever there was a telegraph line by which information might have been sent ahead, Delmy took care to cut it, and had finally vanished like a phantom.

Mark was haggard, pale and dejected. The excitement of the chase had sustained him and his band without the help of due nourishment or sleep; but when they were obliged to accept the conviction that Delmy had made good his escape and carried his prisoner with him, the reaction was extreme. After a few hours' rest and a fruitless inquiry of the authorities at Cincinnati, Mark decided to write a full account to Mrs. Leigh, of the pursuit, and of the probable situation and fate of Philip.

That same day Captain Leigh was sitting on a log near a campfire, bound fast, and reading a Cincinnati

newspaper. It was dated two days after his abduction and contained a narrative of that event as given to a special correspondent, in an interview, by Mr. Smiles. The despatch was dated "Newberg," and began with flaming headlines.

The details given were tolerably accurate up to the time that Philip was dragged from the house; but what followed had a pressing interest for the prisoner as it contained news of subsequent events. The substance of this was a description of Mr. Smiles' injuries received in defence of Captain Leigh, the report said, and the startling information that Mrs. Leigh had insisted upon caring for the injured minister at her own house, where Mrs. and Miss Taine were staying with her.

Mr. Smiles related his conviction that the attack was made by bu glars. He said he had resisted until stunned and left for dead, and was astonished on his return to consciousness to hear the cry of "where is Captain Leigh?" He had not heard of the warning received by Philip, and had no occasion for apprehending danger; but he had a firm conviction that if the negro Dan, Mrs. Taine's coachman, had not gone to sleep in the hayloft, he might have warned them in time to have prevented the attack.

"However," the injured minister remarked towards the close of the interview, "while I shall be the last person in the world to implicate Captain Leigh in the plot, it certainly seems very strange that the details should have been so well concerted, and that I, unarmed and defenseless as I was, should have been nearly murdered while defending him, and he, to all appearances, carried away unhurt."

The correspondent could not close without making a feeling reference to the courtesy and cultured bearing of Mr. Smiles, and to the great kindness and hospitality of Mrs. Leigh who spared no pains to give her husband's gallant defender every comfort of a pleasant home. Philip smiled bitterly at the sentimental gush with which the despatch concluded, but was really amused with other portions of it.

"They evidently have a report that I am my own abductor, and my friend, the Boston parson, seems to favor its plausibility," he mused, as he turned over the limp

and faded sheet, which had been brought into camp that morning wrapped around some provender from a cross-roads store.

Part of the gang were lying a short distance from him wrapped in blankets and fast asleep. Delmy was sitting on a log in front of him cleaning a carbine that had got wet in fording a stream the previous day, and another man, a small fellow of plebian Creole type, sat a few feet further off repairing a saddle girth. The camp was in a small clearing in the midst of an almost primeval forest, and the only sound which broke the stillness of the warm cloudy afternoon, was the intermittent roar of a river they had crossed the previous night.

The carbine in Delmy's hands was accidently discharged, the huge bullet striking the ground near Philip's feet and hissing away among the foliage of the trees behind him. In an instant every man sprang to his feet and grasped his gun to repel an attack. Philip, whose face was pelted with the sand thrown up by the bullet as it passed him, looked up from his paper, and broke the most rigid rule of his captors by exclaiming angrily:

"What's the matter, Captain, do you mean to murder me!"

"No—it's nothing—hold your tongue," growled Delmy.

Philip had been ordered not to speak above a whisper under pain of being gagged. But Delmy motioned the men back as they rushed towards him, and flinging the carbine into the thicket, said it was no good. He then ordered the men to resume their rest as he knew they must need it.

"As to yerself, Mr. Leigh, sense ye'v bin so well behaved so fur, I don't mind ef ye do talk a little bit in a low voice. I don't like to be too hard on no man," said Delmy in a voice of unwonted generosity.

"Thank you very much," replied Philip, "I feel so thoroughly lost that I'd like to ask you where we are, Captain?"

"Well, we're gittin' on, gittin' on slowly, but we ain't thar yit, not by a long shot."

"Was not that the Ohio River we crossed last night?"

"It mout a bin, and then agin it moutn't: Leastways, I can't tell ye, fur I don't know geography very well, and I'm preoccupied with my reflections."

Delmy had shown the most astonishing acquaintance with the country between Cleveland and the Kentucky frontier, and had succeeded in bringing his prisoner triumphantly into the borders of a friendly state. His present stopping place was on the Kentucky shore of the Ohio, a few miles above Maysville, at which point he had arrived without horses, having sunk the jaded nags that brought him the last stage, in the turgid stream before he crossed. But one wretched beast could be found in the neighborhood, and this one had carried "No. 9" to Maysville that morning to procure the mounts for the party which had been arranged for. Delmy knew that there was too much Northern sympathy at Maysville for him to pass that way, but he had plenty of friends there, and felt that one more night's travel would bring him to a point on the railroad from which he could proceed openly, and as a hero, to his destination.

Having finished supper in a few minutes, the men proceeded to pack up their meagre belongings, and Delmy, approaching Philip and addressing him in a low and deferential tone, said:

"It goes right hard with me, Mr. Leigh, to see a Southern gentleman o' your standin' in this here kind of a fix. But, ye see, I can't very well ask one of the boys to tote two saddles, so we'll all have to pack our own traps. I hope you don't object."

"Not at all," said Philip, cheerfully—"I shall try to do my part to assure the success of this noble expedition."

His hands were again tied behind him, and Delmy smiled grimly as he strapped the heavy Mexican saddle over the prisoner's shoulders.

It was almost dark, and the pale light of the stars was beginning to show through the twilight as one by one the men took up their burdens, Delmy being the last to fling a saddle over his back. As he did so, he said: "Come on boys, it's not over three miles to Simpson's Bend."

They started towards the path that led through the thicket on the Maysville side of the clearing, but at that moment a clear voice called out from the rear of the Camp the one word:

"Surrender!"

Delmy wheeled about and clutched his carbine fiercely, but before he could bring it to his shoulder he staggered and fell to the earth, mortally wounded by a bullet from the underbrush. None of his men were ready for a sudden attack; and they were so appalled at the sight of their fallen chief, and of the armed men who now surrounded them, that they halted and flung down their arms in despair.

Again the voice of the attacking leader was heard:

"If you will all surrender unconditionally we will not fire another shot, but not one of you must move on pain of death."

"As we've been betrayed, boys, and they're two to one, there's nothing for it but surrender," said one of the men, doggedly.

"Fall into line, then, and face this way," said James Taine, whom Philip now recognized as the commander of the surprise party.

Delmy's men promptly obeyed the order, and while part of the rescuers stood guard with fixed bayonets others proceeded to put handcuffs on the prisoners, who, for further safety, were all made fast to a strong trace-chain so that they could march single file. All this was done with remarkable expedition. Philip's thongs and burden were removed, and James congratulated him upon his good luck.

The order was given to march, and the Ohio boys proceeded with their captives along the river bank for about a mile. At that point James fired two shots in quick succession from his revolver, and two good sized boats were rowed quickly from the opposite shore. During the walk from the camp and while crossing in the boat, James and Philip were talking apart.

"By what miracle have you been healed of your injuries, and enabled to effect this long journey, and my rescue?" asked Philip, as soon as James was at leisure to converse.

"It has all been more simple, Phil, than it appears at first sight," James replied. "As days elapsed without any news of you, I felt an irresistible longing to take part in the chase. It was on the fourth day after your disappearance that I told Dr. Warren of my resolve to

start out in search of you. That day the doctor said I should incur great risk to my life, and advised me not to think of such an act. I promised to postpone my decision until the following day, and to ask his opinion again. Meanwhile I mentioned the matter to some of the boys, and they were perfectly willing to join me. When the doctor arrived next day, I was walking about the room feeling like a well man; my strength seemed to build up rapidly as my determination became indomitable. The doctor thought this an interesting circumstance, and finally gave his consent to go forward with my project. That night we took the train to Cincinnati, and as good luck would have it struck the trail of your captors in Brown County two days later."

CHAPTER XI.

At Newberg it had been snowing incessantly; and lately a biting frost set in, and an icy wind from the lakes was heaping up great drifts like breast-works of crystal along the fences and across the roads. The chimney corner was now the only comfortable place even for those in vigorous health, and the gentle nurses who had Mr. Smiles in charge would have looked upon it as sheer madness to think of moving their patient to Chestnut Grove.

A month had elapsed since the incident which made him so fortunate a captive, and Mr. Smiles was quite himself in general health, though his broken ankle was slow to knit. During his gradual convalescence he had made it a point to hobble into the sitting room from time to time, and never failed to delight his companions by his charming musical selections, and his varied and attractive conversation. He had taught Hagar the game of chess while still confined to his bed, and she had sat for hours reading to him in his chamber—the sequel being that the ardent young lady loved this accomplished man almost to adoration.

He was so patient and amiable, even merry, through all his sufferings—so considerate and uncomplaining, and so gentle and loving to herself, that she was constrained to look upon him as a superior being, who was conferring an honor in giving her his love. She had often heard the old saw about "living with people to find them out," and had she not lived in close intimacy with her lover for a month, attending him through a painful illness, observing him (she could not realize how uncritically) at one time delirious from the effects of the blow on his head, and at another threatened with the loss of a broken limb, only to discover in his character new excellencies every day?

At length the weather moderated, and by the dawning of the New Year the snow had almost entirely disappeared. A prevailing southerly wind had brought to

the wintry region the balmy breath of Spring, and Hagar and her prospective husband agreed that now was the time to move to Chestnut Grove, which was done without delay.

A few days after her return home Hagar wrote an affectionate note to Dr. Taine who had remained at Cleveland since James's expedition, for the purpose of breaking to him the news of her intended marriage, and begging him to come to see them all while the weather was so fine.

A day or two later Dr. Taine came to Chestnut Grove unexpectedly just in time for tea. Hagar ran out to greet him with all her wonted tenderness; but to Mrs. Taine and the minister his arrival was an unwelcome surprise. The Doctor had determined to question Mr. Smiles on the subject of his intended marriage, and after supper invited him into the study for that purpose.

They had chatted a few minutes when the Doctor said:

"I understand, Mr. Smiles, though you have not yourself mentioned the subject to me, that you intend to take my daughter Hagar to wife?"

"Rather, your adopted daughter, I believe, Doctor? Yes sir, that is quite true."

This impertinent qualification did not sound well to the Doctor's ear, so he spoke up rather severely:

"I call her my daughter, for she seems like my own having grown up here from infancy. I love her as my own; seek her happiness as if she were my own; protect her as my own."

"Or better, perhaps;" said Smiles to himself, as the doctor dwelt on these expressions. "Egad! perhaps she is your own!"

The Doctor went on:

"You will pardon me, therefore, if I ask you a question or two, which, I apprehend, are wholly unnecessary, but are not intended to be impertinent or offensive."

"You will admit, Doctor, that we should not suspect our own cloth! But, I shall gladly answer any question you are pleased to put if it is in my power."

"There are, no doubt, many societies in a great city like Boston which do not figure in the directories?"

"I should say so, certainly," Smiles replied, coolly, catching the Doctor's drift at once.

"I was looking for the address of your society of the "Christian Disciples" in a Boston directory for 1861, but could not find it."

"I was not aware that we did not figure in that respectable volume, but am delighted to hear that such is the case. The circumstance, however, is easily accounted for: our object is to act, not to pose. I see how it is, Doctor Taine, you doubt me, though for what reason—well, perhaps you could hardly say yourself?" A steady look convinced him that the old gentleman was not instigated by anything more serious than a passing caprice, so he altered his tone and continued with humility: "But, believe me, sir, I shall not go one step further in this affair until your doubts are cleared up. A letter simply addressed to the secretary of our society, Boston, will meet with a prompt reply. If it is not satisfactory concerning me I will withdraw at your command. Do you ask more than this?"

Here was exactly what the Doctor had already done, and his misgivings now seemed to fade out of his mind. He could scarcely catch an outline of them, or frame a doubt on which to string them together again. It was clearly, he reflected, a case of youth and love: the happy smile of Hagar, her dream of the joys promised by her new estate, were present in the old man's reflections; for a moment he could not find words to reply. Finally, he said:

"I think your motto, "To act, and not to pose," is one of the best I ever heard for any society. Your organization must be a noble one." He spoke like one who was trying to repair a wound he had inflicted without provocation, and little thought the 'motto' was composed at the moment it was pronounced. "But" he continued, still regarding himself as an offender, "you must not imagine that I meant to infer anything unjust to you, Mr. Smiles, far from it; and I should like you to tell me something about the work in which your society is engaged."

In nothing was Mr. Smiles more at home than in the description of philanthropic enterprise. On this occasion he made such a deep impression upon his auditor that the Doctor consumed four pages of his next letter to James in recounting the virtues of the Chris-

tian Disciples, of whom Mr. Smiles was represented as a leader.

When Mr. Smiles withdrew and left him alone to his meditations, the Doctor's mind was entirely at rest where the young minister was concerned; and when the latter reentered the sitting room where Mrs. Taine and Hagar were awaiting him, he said in reply to their enquiring looks:

"He has consented."

CHAPTER XII.

Who buys a minute's mirth, to wail a week?
Or sells eternity to get a toy?
For one sweet grape, who will the vine destroy?
Or what fond beggar, but to touch the crown,
Would with the sceptre straight be stricken down?"

—*Shakspeare.*

Next morning, as soon as he got an opportunity to speak with Mrs. Taine—(and he always made a point of letting her feel the honor of his confidences,) Mr. Smiles informed her that he had received a call from his Society to an important field of duty at Cincinnati, and caused that good woman no small amount of consternation by telling her that he should be compelled (though much against his wishes) to postpone his marriage with Hagar for at least a year on account of these labors and the meagreness of his revenues.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mrs. Taine, with a penetrating glance through the gold-rimmed spectacles, "Did you suppose for one moment that I had failed to provide for such a contingency? Listen: I have it plotted, mapped, and scheduled, as my agent says; that's my habit with all I do. I have $2,000 in the house that I have been waiting to place in your hands. And now that you must make this trip, I will send for $2,000 more, and you shall take your wife with you. Oh! not a word, not a word—I won't hear it. I'm an awful tyrant to those I love. Sit down and listen!" She was quite out of breath as she dropped into her chair, and seemed more than usually excited.

"You see, Dr. Taine," said she, speaking with anxious haste, and clasping one of the young man's hands in both her own, "with his usual wrong-headedness, said he thought the wedding should be a quiet family affair, and performed here at the house by himself. But I want it to take place in church—your church, I mean, with all the requisite surroundings, floral decorations and so forth, as dictated by good breeding. I want a brilliant choral service too—a regular stylish

wedding, you know. Some people have reviled me and misrepresented me for my treatment of Hagar, and I mean to let them see by the wedding I give her how they have wronged and misjudged me."

"My dear Madame," said Mr. Smiles, concealing his amusement, and leaning towards her with a look of entreaty, "you are too good and generous. I could not allow you to waste your money in such a way upon us. I should prefer to have you send the sum such a service would cost, to one of the hospitals. My own tastes, as you well know, are opposed to everything like ostentation, and the public wedding which you unselfishly propose, would be entirely out of keeping with my character and calling. I trust, therefore, that you will let your bounty take another shape, and absolve me from such an ordeal."

"But what will the friends of my family think?" asked Mrs. Taine, in a tone which told that her resolution had been sadly shaken by the parson's few well chosen words.

"What will they think in any case,?" He asked, significantly, but with a good natured smile. "Some would doubtless say that our public wedding was for vulgar display, while others would contend with equal vehemence that a private ceremony is the result of vulgar parsimony. I should much prefer Dr. Taine to officiate: besides, it will please Hagar. And, moreover, why would it not be well since we cannot evade reproach as the world goes, to choose the course which is most congenial to ourselves?"

The magical effect of his reasoning was evidenced by the old lady's reply:

"Well then, I won't oppose you," she said, with her characteristic little laugh, a sort of forced titter, "for it is entirely useless, I find. And besides, by having a quiet wedding, we shall keep all the more money for our European travels: I have given quite enough for the war, when you count the new taxes! Very well; that is settled—now let me proceed. No use thinking of crossing the ocean before April or May, and in the meantime you can give the society notice that you want leave for a few months; say, from May 1st: that will give them time to send somebody to relieve you. When

shall we have the wedding?" She asked the last question suddenly as if the remainder of her plan depended on the reply.

"Without delay," answered Mr. Smiles, "if I am to take Hagar with me, for my orders are to go to Cincinnati at the earliest possible moment."

"Yes if Hagar is agreeable: I will ask her."

"I will answer for her—it will be all right."

And it was even so: Hagar was not in the least opposed to a hasty marriage, but stipulated that one more day should be allowed her for indispensable preparations.

"This being Tuesday," she said to her betrothed, who was holding her fast in his embrace, "let us have the ceremony on Thursday afternoon. I must go and fetch Josephine, you know. Will you come with me, Benjamin?" she concluded, with an arch look.

"Hagar," he replied, "I do not think Mrs. Leigh will care to come and I hope you won't urge her. You are quite right that Thursday will be better than to-morrow, and you might go and see Mrs. Leigh to-day. I, however, shall not have the pleasure of going with you, as I shall be detained by some important correspondence which I have already neglected too long. And, by the bye, dear Hagar, you might ask Mrs. Leigh, casually, you know, for the address of her husband: I'm anxious to communicate with him."

"But why may I not urge Josephine to come?"

"Because I want you all to myself, you little rogue."

"I believe you are jealous of her!"

"Well, it doesn't signify so long as you are not," he replied, laughingly. "So be off with you, and don't forget your errand to obtain the address of Captain Leigh."

A few minutes later Hagar drove over to Newberg, where she passed the day with her friend.

Though he had been subjected to several interruptions by his most assiduous hostess, Mr. Smiles completed his tasks before the short winter day had dropped its curtains in the west. He then seemed restless for Hagar's return, and after walking to the gate and taking a long look down the road, he paced the avenue listening for the approach of her carriage wheels.

"Well, my darling, how did you find Mrs. Leigh?" he asked, as he helped her to alight.

"Lonely and sad enough. She is in a dreadful way about her husband—you know, he never came back to see her after he was kidnapped?"

"What can it mean? Of course you have invited her to come here on Thursday—and is she coming?"

"No; she said it would be impossible. She is oppressed by some great sorrow, I am sure. She tries to conceal it but it shows too plainly on her face. Ever since I left her that sad white face has haunted me. She seems to be quite desperate."

"Poor woman!" exclaimed Mr. Smiles. "I was right, she remembers"—he said to himself.

"Hagar," said he tenderly as they went along in the twilight, "can you realize that only this night and one more have to pass, and you will be my own?" Her eyes were on the ground and she made no reply.

"Now suppose," he continued, watching her closely, "suppose that anything should happen to prevent our union?" She looked up suddenly, startled from her reverie.

"But nothing can!" she replied, simply.

"Nothing of the sort seems likely, I know. But, suppose (bearing in mind the uncertainties of life), that some unforeseen contingency should arise to prevent it?"

"It would kill me!" she replied, nestling more closely to his strong arm.

"Well then," he went on, after kissing her to quiet her fears, "what if we are duly married and I always remain a poor missionary, as at present?"

"Poverty has no terrors for me," she replied spiritedly; "I know how to work, and I am neither ashamed nor afraid to do so. Whether we have a cot or a mansion, I will always strive to give it the attractions of home for you."

"But, if I should be driven and persecuted and we never have even a cot to call our own?"

"Why talk of such things? You will never be 'driven' or 'persecuted,' and a man of your talent and education can obtain whatever he wants in this great land. I don't believe in talking about misfortune before it comes, and even then, I think, the least said about it, the better."

"Ha! ha!" he cried merrily, "I only asked these questions to hear your sweet replies, and now I am satisfied. Even if I had to suffer martyrdom, would you wish to perish with me at the stake?"

"Indeed I would; I could not survive your loss for a day!"

"And all this for a poor unknown parson! Ah, well, Hagar, perhaps you might have done worse. Heaven knows! But now, tell me, did Mrs. Leigh give you her husband's address?"

"Yes, it is Cairo, Illinois, at present, but he is going into Tennessee at once."

Before he said good night, after a game of chess and some music, he informed Hagar that he must go into the city next day to communicate by telegraph with his superiors, and to attend to other urgent business.

CHAPTER XIII.

Oblivious to the fact that both the civil and military police of Cleveland were that day on the lookout for an agent of the "Disciples," Mr. Smiles drove into the city late in the afternoon. Having posted several letters, and sent a number of despatches in cipher, he attended to other business matters and finally called at one of the branch telegraph offices to forward this brief telegram:—

"Madame Adamanti, No — —— St., Cincinnati: Expect me with a recruit soon. March."

Before reentering the carriage, he held a quiet conversation with Dan, who then drove out of the city and took the road towards Newberg. Though the evening was cold Smiles was mopping the perspiration from his forehead. His face showed more expression than usual; the veins of his neck and temples were purple and distended, and a pallid ring like a chalk mark encircled his mouth. He made an effort to shake off these ague-like symptoms, but without success. He strove to convince himself that Josephine had recognized him during his stay at her house. Her refusal to come to the wedding he thought a strong proof, and what could be more conclusive than the fact that she had remained constantly with him for a month instead of flying to her husband who was detained at Cincinnati by his professional duties?

"It is enough, and more than enough; why should I hesitate? The case of poor Hagar is rather a hard one anyhow, and while this enterprise, if it is successful, will probably throw her into a fever, it may save her from—well, from something worse! And this will be a sweet revenge on Leigh for crushing my head and breaking my leg."

The carriage stopped at the Leigh cottage, and Mr. Smiles was quite his natural self again, seeing still beyond the hazard, the certainty of success.

"I wonder if she is alone?" thought he as he noticed

that the blinds were closely drawn, and that only a thin streak of light was visible at one side of a window. He looked at his watch. It was eight o'clock. As he alighted from the carriage he remarked that the school house in the square was lighted, and muttered scornfully :—

"Another infernal concert, I suppose!"

"Dan," said he softly, as he buttoned his overcoat closely about him, "blanket your horses and sit inside the carriage, I won't be long. And look here, I'm going to give you more for to-night's work than Dr. Taine gives you in six months, provided you do just as I tell you. In religious matters there are many things to be done that you won't understand, so all you have to do is obey orders and ask no questions, you see?"

"Oh yes, I 'stan fust rate, Mars' Smiles, dem's jest my orders from missus, an' I 'beys her ebbery time," said Dan, imitating the low voice of his present master.

"It may be that some of these cheeky villagers will stop to ask you whom you have brought here to-night. If they do, you can tell them it's Mrs. Taine who has called on her way from town to take Mrs. Leigh home for Miss Hagar's wedding. You might say on your own account that it is not likely Mrs. Leigh would care to have a neighbor drop in."

One of Mr. Smiles' proverbs was that no man could be a thoroughly good rogue unless he was an adept at lying, and he was not averse to trying his skill now and then in the latter art.

He had laid his crutch aside in the morning and walked with a slight limp; but he approached the door with a light tread and rapped gently with his knuckles. No answer. He rapped a little louder.

"Come in," was the languid summons of a voice which he recognized as that of Mrs. Leigh.

He entered, hat in hand. She was alone, and sat with a small table drawn near the fire reading a volume of poems. She had attired herself as attractively as when expecting Philip to come home, and was thinking of his gloomy bivouac somewhere in the wilds of Tennessee when the knock awoke her from her reverie.

"You, Mr. Smiles!" she exclaimed in a startled voice. The apparition of her late patient was not a pleasant

surprise; but she quickly resumed her composure, and rising, advanced a step towards him to offer him her hand.

"What a vision!" he muttered to himself, as she came forward. I am afraid I have disturbed you, my dear Mrs. Leigh," he continued as he shook her hand ceremoniously; but the fact is, I could not find it in my heart to leave this part of the country without calling to see you once more, and this was my only opportunity. Am I forgiven?"

"I am sure it was very kind of you to think of me, Mr. Smiles," said Mrs. Leigh, with cordiality. She resumed her rocking chair, and beckoned him to be seated. "You have quite recovered, it seems, as you have discarded your crutches?" she added, glancing at him a look of interest.

"Yes: only a slight lameness remaining, thanks to your tender care, and Hagar's, of course.....She was very devoted for one so young, was she not?"

"I think Hagar a model of unselfishness, and true womanly gentleness. I have seen very few like her."

"I have seen at least one who was her equal in these beautiful traits. But why recur to that now? I have called with another object besides merely seeing you, Mrs. Leigh: But, tell me, why were you so startled when I came in?"

Josephine had sunk back quite languidly in her cushioned rocking chair, and was listening to Mr. Smiles with friendly interest.

"I must really ask your pardon, Mr. Smiles; I was surprised to see you, for I had not dreamed of such a ceremonious caller."

"But why were you surprised at my apparition—did you think I should prove so ungrateful as to go away without even bidding you good-bye? Well, it is enough that I was not so. I have been looking forward to this hour when I might offer you a memento of my esteem and gratitude. Will you accept it?" Leaning towards her he held open in his hand a tiny velvet case from which the glare of a brilliant diamond set in a heavy gold ring, flashed in her eyes. She took it mechanically, and raised the massive jewel from its socket. Her only emotion as she held it up was that

of delighted curiosity which women usually exhibit at the sight of anything rarely beautiful. But of a sudden as she examined it, she let it fall from her shaking hand, and stared into his face. He had not expected the ring to produce exactly this effect, and felt slightly disconcerted. He sprang forward to her support, but she quickly recovered herself.

"It is nothing—only a slight faintness—I have been sitting too near the fire."

With much courteous fluster he proceeded to move the table and her chair away from the hearth, saying as he did so that the room was decidedly warm.

"Will you please bring me a glass of water from the next room. You will find a caraffe on the sideboard."

Immediately he turned, she took a hurried but searching look at the ring, and then replaced it in the case and laid it on the table. As she did so she muttered to herself :—

"It is ; it is !"

In those few seconds the incidents of years thronged through her memory, and as he returned to her side she scrutinized his features closely, but without detecting anything to justify her in connecting him with her former acquaintance with the dazzling gem.

She moistened her lips with the water and thanked him for his trouble. Mr. Smiles felt puzzled. Could she still be ignorant of his identity after having recognized the ring ? Or was this merely a bit of comedy to try him ? After a moment's pause he took the jewel from the table and exclaimed in an injured tone :

"What ! you have abandoned the souvenir ?"

"You owe me nothing Mr. Smiles, and I can accept nothing from you for the poor hospitality I could offer you when you were nearly killed in my husband's defence,"

"You do not like the ring ?"

"Oh, yes—I think it the finest one I ever saw."

"You may well say so, for there are few like it, and yet you refuse it ? It is old and of historical fame. I bought it from a foreigner years ago, and you are the only friend I have had whom I deemed worthy of it."

"But you have not owned it long, you say ?"

Mrs. Leigh asked this question calmly, but she felt a fearful apprehension stealing over her.

"Oh, yes, I have," replied Smiles quickly, "Nobody except myself has ever owned it—in this country—I have had it for ten years."

Mrs. Leigh was silent for a moment. She was unable to speak. Breaking the pause with an effort, she said:

"Then, pardon me. Should you not give it to your bride rather than to a stranger?" Again she took the opportunity to scan his features, and a sense of dreamy bewilderment took possession of her, as she once more failed to recognize the man.

"May I not give what is my own to whom I choose?—provided, of course, the chosen one will accept. But it is plain you do not like my offering. It does not please you; therefore, I must urge you no further, but will take my leave with all proper apologies." At this he rose and looked steadily at her to observe the effect of his words. They were evidently more welcome than he had hoped, and he felt annoyed. 'So she really wanted him to withdraw,' was his reflection. Very well, then, since he could not induce a chase by a feigned retreat, he would return again to the direct attack. He resumed his chair.

"From a remark you made a moment ago, Mrs. Leigh, I judged you thought you had seen that ring before. Was I right?"

She was about to rise to bid him good night, and felt a slight relief at the thought of his departure. But now her faintness returned, and it was with considerable difficulty that she said:

"If so, it was merely a fancy,—I presume there are many rings alike—"

"But," pursued he, "there is not another in the world like this. It is an amulet: but indeed you may have seen it before. Suppose I say that I am sure you have? Suppose further, that I should tell you the time and place?" He drew near her: the ring flashed in her face.

"Look at it again!"

"Please pardon me, Mr. Smiles," she said imploringly, "if I ask you to leave me. I have been ill and harassed for some time, and am even worse than usual to-night. I beg you, therefore, leave me, and if my obstinacy offends you, you may let the ring remain here, and when

my husband returns I will ask him if I may accept it."

Smiles replaced the ring in its case, and slipped it into his pocket. Mrs. Leigh was not aware he had done so, but was surprised that he did not heed her request to withdraw.

"Am I in any wise the unhappy cause of your indisposition, my dear madame? Or can I be of any service to you?" He leaned forward and grasped her hand passionately. But his touch had the effect of awakening her to an ecstacy of rage and ferocity. She sprang to her feet and demanded in a subdued but threatening voice:

"Well sir, what is the meaning of this? You, a minister of the gospel, and not know how to treat a woman? Begone, sir!"

"Be calm, my dear madam, please be calm. I was merely going to wish you good night.....But that was a splendid flash of passion, Josephine—it was indeed! Ha! ha! ha! You might have been a second Rachel, if you had only taken to the stage instead of to—er—marriage." As he uttered these phrases in a tone of taunting raillery, he took a few steps backward to reach the key in the front door which he turned.

"You take offense too soon, my dear Josephine; you do, upon my soul. Why, if all your sex took fire in this way the world would not be fit for any man of spirit to live in! But I was going to tell you of the ring. Do you recall a fine young priest whose crown was not two months shorn; a Maying party, and a very secluded glen near Vicksburg, in 1854? It was when the birds were mating; you were not such marble then, by the confession that gay young neophyte made to me. Oh! the magic ring; can it have lost it's charm?"

As he spoke, Josephine moved to the further side of the room where her work basket lay. She kept her eyes fastened on him, and felt in the basket until she found a small embroidery stilletto the only weapon she had.

Smiles never forgot how terribly beautiful she looked as she stood there at bay.

Moving towards her, he said, "I really thought you knew me, Josephine!"

"How dare you use my name sir! Begone at once, or I will cry for help!"

"No, Josephine, not yet, ma chere, you might be sorry for it."

He regarded her steadily: she felt some mesmeric influence projected by this glance which paralyzed her power of resistance.

"No wonder you do not know me. I was a lean, unripe stripling then, not the finished man of the world you see me now. Have I not improved?"

Josephine flinched perceptibly at these words, and thought of one whose memory she had cursed in her heart for nearly seven years.

"Silence!" she cried, "I know you now. George Lamont, the villain for whom—" she hesitated as if choked by passion. He caught up her words—

"For whom you crossed the Rubicon, Josephine. The same: as always, at your service."

She fixed her eyes on him and came towards him, the keen steel gleaming in her hand. He watched her like a lynx: sprang forward and seized her with his strong grip, and she dropped the weapon on the floor. He kicked it aside, and forcing her into a chair, said:

"Now Josephine, you will listen to reason. You are in my power: I can ruin you completely, or I can render you the envy of your sex. You want to talk, of course; but don't say a word until I finish. It is ten minutes past nine. I can only allow you half an hour to arrive at a decision."

"You threaten in vain," she said with strange composure. In half an hour my companion, Miss Wilson will return; until then, I defy you."

"Very well," he replied, with a suggestive smile. "Now suppose you listen to me as patiently as I have heard you? Don't go on railing, for I also can do that if occasion demands. Mind, you have threatened to murder me here to-night. And yet I know you love me!"

"Coward!"

"Hark! I have here in my pocket the note you wrote me appointing the tryst which, for me, proved such a fatality. There, there, don't say a word: I was an innocent lamb just entering my novitiate in grace, when you came upon the scene and ruined me."

"Have done, George Lamont, your effrontery is more

than I can bear!" She moved towards the door. He stepped back, and taking the key from the lock, held it up before her.

"This note," he then said, leisurely, bears no date, is as fresh in appearance as if written to-day, (I have kept it carefully) and I know your writing has not altered much. It begins with "my darling" simply, and ends with "Josephine" precisely as I have seen it signed to notes you have written Hagar." She made a second move to pass him, with the terror of a hunted creature in her eyes.

He grasped her wrist fiercely and swinging her around forced her again into her chair. Then, his lips close to her ear, he continued in a shrill whisper;—

"You know that your husband, Philip Leigh, the renegade, hates you." She started as if she had been stabbed. "You know it, I say. But he more than hates you, he suspects, distrusts you, thinks you a wanton. I heard him say as much to Mark Kilbourne one night at Chestnut Grove."

Josephine's head sank. She was crushed by shame and terror. Like a tortured child she at last burst into tears. Suddenly her tears were checked as were his words. They heard a sound of laughter at the gate.

She rose, inspired with new force. "Now, sir, begone before I deliver you into the hands of those who —" her voice faltered, and she staggered to the table.

"One word and you are lost!" the same hissing whisper came to her.

"I am here at your appointment. You understand? Your friends will know your hand-writing; I will read your note to them and let them decide which of us is in the wrong. But listen—they have seen the carriage at the gate, and passed on guessing rightly that you—have —company."

Josephine looked about her helplessly, not realizing what he said, and still expecting help to come. The strain had been too great and she fell back, fainting. Disregarding her, he held his ear to the keyhole to satisfy himself that all was quiet outside. Dan's report had proved satisfactory, and Miss Wilson had continued to her own home. He then approached the prostrate form of his victim and raised her gently to the sofa

where he bathed her temples, and moistened her lips with water. She still remained unconscious and he went into the dining-room to look for brandy; but finding nothing stronger than a decanter of sweet wine, he brought a glass of that and applied it to her lips.

When she finally opened her eyes she saw the parson seated near her with an expression on his calm face which said as plainly as words: "I conquer." All that had been passing was perfectly clear to her; she was not surprised to see Lamont there, but lay gazing calmly at him, half in wonder, half in entreaty.

"Drink this glass of wine, Josephine, it will revive you," urged Lamont, tenderly.

"Did not Miss Wilson come in? I heard her voice." He answered by pressing the glass towards her, but she declined to drink.

"No, she has gone home, and no one else will come here to night."

"But you are still here, George Lamont. Why is this? What is your motive?"

"To tell you my love, and ask you to fly with me from this place forever."

She had lain still on the sofa, but now she sat up and looked at him perplexedly.

"Fly with you? Fly with you!" she repeated with an expression of surprise and contempt, "you are a madman; I do not understand you."

"You shall, then, in a moment. You told me that I was the first and only man you ever loved," said he, as if beginning a narrative.

"And how you rewarded me for my confession!" she spoke with deep emotion, and in shame covered her face with her hands.

"Admit that we were both wrong then, Josephine: we can now repair that wrong—I to you, and you to me."

"Blot out one sin by committing a greater? No, your sophistries cannot deceive me now! You speak of wrong: I never wronged you."

"We shall come to that. You remember the profession I had chosen? I am going to exercise it now for the first time: I am going to preach."

"Oh! for pity's sake spare me! Remember my father's friendship to you; your respect for your own sisters——"

"Gone, Josephine, gone with my loss of you. Your frailty was like a red-hot brand drawn across my life, blasting it through and through! I rarely speak my heart; but I speak it now, and you understand me! Your father befriended me and was my friend, until he proved my deadliest enemy in that he had not grounded his daughter's character in virtue impregnable. I then possessed the truest qualification for the career I had chosen: Virtue! and you say you never wronged me, though you robbed me of that! Ah! yes, that conceit surprises you, as it would most women; but still it is true. I had not the art to tempt you then, but you had the wantoness to lure me on to ruin, and your fall not only killed the immortal part of me when first I broke my awful vows, but it robbed me of you, of my hopes, my ambition, my friends! From that moment you, the beautiful, the accomplished, the favorite of men and women alike, became an outcast in my sight. I despised you! I know you would say you yielded because of your love and trust in me, for them you should have resisted until death! The lover loathes the woman who yields to his unrighteous lust as the husband the wife who yields herself to a paramour's embrace. So it was with me: what I had pursued so ardently, in one moment turned to ashes in my hand. I fled from my home; abandoned my fortune and my prospects; sought only for excitement and diversion. Everywhere I found women who were as compliant as I had proved you——"

"Oh! mercy, mercy—you are killing me!" She fell on her face before him.

"My fate since that day has been unmerciful. And yet you will not confess the wrong and seek its remedy. You are unhappy, so am I. Our union can repair all and our loss will prove a riddance to those we leave behind."

"My brain is so weary.... I can not think," she said, raising herself with feeble effort to her feet. "Wait until to-morrow,—you could come in the afternoon—and if I have wronged you as you say you shall have my life to pay for it. I have thought that you betrayed and deserted me with callous cruelty; but if I am wrong, and the wicked wretch you make me out, I am not fit to live.

If you bring poison with you I will take it and so expiate my crimes."

She seated herself by the table, and laid her bowed head on her arms. The picture he had made was etched upon her heart: in it wronged and wronger had changed places.

The fire had died out in the grate, the room grew cold, her tears had ceased to flow; her shoulders were drawn up by the chill that had seized upon her. Her eyes, which she had turned away from Lamont, were fixed in a dull stare.

"You will never see Philip Leigh again," said Lamont with emphasis. "He is a marked man, and will be killed by the Confederate sharpshooters in the first fight he enters, no matter what his disguise or nom de guerre." He paused to note the effect of his words, but she neither moved nor spoke. "I love you," he continued, resting a gentle hand on her wrist. I can save you from your despair and loneliness. All else—this folly about the foundling daughter of old Taine, is a delusion, a farce—You are the only woman I love. You shall go with me, away from the bleak frigidity of this clime and people. We will go abroad—anywhere you will—until the war is over; and then we can come home, defying the world to live but for each other."

He dropped on one knee beside her, and taking her icy hand in his warm grasp, pressed it passionately to his lips. He thought surrender imminent from the cessation of resistance.

"Yes, yes," she muttered faintly, leaning towards him, and pressing his hand in her frozen clasp—"that will do very well—it will become me."

Her face being still turned towards the wall, he had not been aware of the agony it portrayed, and mistook a quiescence which was the result of failing consciousness for capitulation. Her next words, which were even fainter and spoken through a painful sobbing, brought him to his feet:

"It will look well in my coffin: red and gold. It sounds very pretty—very pretty."

She was sinking rapidly, and would have fallen headlong upon the floor if he had not supported her.

"Good God! what's this?" he cried, "Josephine!

Josephine!" Snatching the shade from the lamp he turned her face to the light, and was appalled at the fixed and deathlike stare. "She's dying!" he gasped, as he bore her to the sofa, and stood beside her meditating what was best to do.

The calm and ready George Lamont was astounded by the turn his experiment had taken, and at once concluded that his best plan was to retire without delay. He did not wish that she should freeze to death, and, wrapping some rugs of fur about her, wrote on a leaf from his note-book in a disguised hand:—

"Mrs. Leigh very ill—help at once."

He felt her pulse and listened to the beating of her heart to make sure she was still living, turned the lamp low, and stole away.

As he went he remembered his defeat by Philip Leigh in the game of chess they had played together. It was significant. As he left the room he picked up the stiletto and used it to fasten the leaf from his note-book to the gate-post.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Don't speak, Dan," said he in a whisper, as he approached the carriage. Don't say a word until we get out of the town. I'll make this right with you."

Dan drew the rugs from the horses backs and drove away quietly towards home. The night was dark, so dark that it would have been difficult to keep the road but for the gleaming crust of snow which, reflecting the starlight, made the way clear.

Lamont was exceedingly preoccupied during the drive, and for the first time for several years experienced that confusion and indecision of the will which is characteristic of feeble minded men, but had seldom troubled him. His deliberate intention had been, even from the period of his first visit to Chestnut Grove, to marry Hagar under the name which had served him as a mask for two years; live with her as long as convenience and inclination would permit, as had been his custom with former victims, and abandon her to her fate whenever it should suit his whim; and, in the meanwhile, obtain as much money as he could from Mrs. Taine. While reflecting upon the subject as he went along that night he felt half inclined to forego this adventure, the anticipation of which had been so pleasant to his palate.

There seemed to be a warning and a menace in his night's experience at Mrs. Leigh's. There was no moment during his strange career when he had felt so fierce a struggle between conscience and inclination. But instead of forming then a settled resolution in favor of the right, he left the future, as he had the past, to chance.

On referring to his watch he found that it was but a few minutes before two o'clock, and he was made aware by familiar objects along the road that they were nearing Chestnut Grove. While one impulse pushed him on to the consummation of his present scheme, another,

no less urgent, was prompting him to be gone from there at once.

"Her guardian angel standing at the gate to drive me back!" was his reflection as this feeling rebuked him like an invisible hand. "Well, let me see," he went on, his conscience still debating with his passion. "She refused to elope with me, and it was partly in revenge for that, and partly to oblige "my dear Mrs. Taine," that I decided to marry her. Now, if she still has sense enough not to elope I'll spare her. No one could be more considerate than that! Let me see, the Buffalo train passes through Cleveland at four o'clock, stopping fifteen minutes. Plenty of time, she may go with me if she likes. I will leave it to her. Otherwise I will go alone and let Dan tell her when the hour for our marriage arrives to-day, that I am a married man, who, in spite of her charms, has decided to return to his wife. Ha! ha! Egad! here we are. Now if her guardian angel don't stop me at the gate he certainly ought to prevent her from quitting her chamber at this hour on such a cold morning."

The carriage stopped, and Dan jumped down to open the gate.

"Wait a moment, Daniel," said Lamont, alighting from the carriage. "Are you cold?"

"No sah, on'y radder chilly 'bout the toes," replied the darkey, who had been well bundled up in one of the horse-blankets.

"Never felt such air as this in the cotton country, eh, Daniel? Well, never mind, here's another little warmer for you. You shall have more later on. And now listen to me. I don't want you to unhitch your horses yet. You can drive inside and tie them, put on their blankets, and fetch them a good feed of oats. I'll see that you get something to eat. Only keep perfectly quiet, ask no questions, and obey me as your mistress ordered."

Dan, cold and sleepy, was surprised at Lamont's orders. He began to mumble something by way of protest.

"No back talk, nigger!" said Lamont, angrily, "or I'll have you sent home, where you belong, to work under the lash on Southern fortifications. Your owner, old Cap-

tain Leigh, is a general now, and will be glad to see you back." The boy's fears were fully aroused by these threats, and he was all compliance in a moment.

"I do jes ez you sez, Massa Smile—jes ez you sez—ebb'ry ting."

"Very well, then, see that you do, and before daylight this shall be yours." As he spoke he held out his gloved hand before the negro, whose bright eyes saw a gold coin shining in his palm.

Lamont left Dan to execute his order, and repaired to the house. As he expected, he found Mrs. Taine awaiting him in the cosy sitting-room; and, as he did not expect, Hagar there with her, aroused by his arrival from a restless nap on the sofa.

"Well!" exclaimed Mrs. Taine, throwing up her hands, "for heaven's sake, what has happened?"

She embraced him with her usual enthusiasm, and began to unbutton his overcoat; but Lamont drew back, saying coldly, that he had scarcely a moment to remain. In short, he said, he had received bad news, and must be off at once. He kissed Hagar, who seemed worried and excited, and then said impressively:

"Yes, it is a great blow, my dear madame, and I feel that I ought not to repeat what has happened, to anybody but yourself."

To have anything mysterious confided to her was, perhaps, Mrs. Taine's keenest pleasure.

"Go, Hagar, child—go to your room, if it's not proper for you to hear."

"Be off at once, Benjamin?" said Hagar, in a tone of supplication, and clinging to him fondly. "Why, where can you go at this hour? What has happened? Have you forgotten that this is our—" She hesitated, and hung her head.

"Our wedding day; I know, dearest Hagar, that it was to have been so, but it is impossible; I cannot delay one hour. Indeed, I have no right to be here now wasting the seconds it takes to say these words, and my coming to bid you farewell was only made possible by the fact that there is no train until four o'clock. Everything depends on my reaching Cincinnati at the earliest moment."

"And when will you return?" Hagar inquired, anxiously.

"I may not be able to get away while the war continues. My labors will be among the wounded, and will require my constant attention."

Hagar looked desolate, and poor Mrs. Taine was completely cast down. Her disappointment was a cruel blow.

"But," exclaimed Lamont, cheerfully, "you must 'speed the parting guest.' I have but a quarter of an hour to remain with you, so while the horses are being fed, and Dan gets a bite, suppose"—

"Yes, suppose we have some supper? I would give anything I possess in this world to have you remain to carry out the little programme we arranged; but, of course, everything must give way to calls of duty, especially in time of war. Well, well! I'll go and see if there's not something ready in the kitchen."

"I know, dearest Hagar," said Lamont, after the old lady went out, "that you think it a cruel hardship to have me leave you at this time and in this way; but I have no choice, and we must comfort ourselves by reflecting that in the end it may prove to be for the best."

"But you will often write me?"

"Oh, yes. Very often."

"And after you are settled there, could I not join you? I shall be so lonely here when you are gone! And I am sure in the sad work you are going to do, you will need my help—I ought to be with you there."

"No, Hagar, you could not make the long journey by yourself, and I shall be moving constantly from place to place; you must be patient, and await my return."

"But can you not delay just till to-morrow, or even until this evening? Think how all has been arranged, and what a disappointment it will be to Father Taine. Think too what the gossips will have to say about you—about me— about us all. Must you go at once?"

"Indeed I must, Hagar, no matter what the sacrifice to myself or to those most dear. But there is still one way left by which we may forestall fate, and prevent the delay of our union."

"There is? Then why did you say we must part?"

"Because the hazard is too much for you. It would necessitate your leaving with me, now, in a few minutes."

"I am ready!" she answered.

He pressed her tenderly to his breast, and said in a low voice:

"Do not decide too rashly—think of the night, the bitter cold, my poverty—"

"But you will be with me. I cannot bear the thought of parting from you now, for I should be afraid it was forever."

"Well then, if you are decided, you have not a moment to lose."

"I am determined that you shall not leave me idly here. I must go with you!"

"Make haste then—and see: you shall wear this for my sake." He placed a heavy gold ring on her wedding finger. "Now hurry to your room and pack a satchel with the articles most necessary to your present comfort. Put on your warmest wraps, and be quick and silent; Mrs. Taine might object if she knew your sudden purpose. As soon as you are ready go out the back door, enter the carriage waiting at the gate, and send Dan for your satchel, which you can leave at the door. When he has brought it and you are all ready send him here to tell me the horses have done eating. Then I will join you. Quick now, child, or Mrs. Taine will be back."

Several minutes elapsed before Mrs. Taine returned, and in the interval Lamont's brain was busy. He paced the floor restlessly, while flitting thoughts danced and circled in his mind like dry leaves in a whirl-wind.

"The guardian angel is off duty then," he muttered. "Natural restrictions and conventionalities, luckily, save the mass of them; but few indeed are guarded by that angel with the flaming two-edged sword, Knowledge. No wonder men regard them as lawful game, the best specimens of which fall to the lot of the most valiant hunter. The syllogism runs thus: Women are either beautiful fools or beautiful devils; men are either villains or brutes, but are always pursuing the beautiful She. Ergo, villain catches fool, and brute, devil: thus monstrous vices are perpetuated. Some day I'll write a book about it, to show how they court destruction, and how they only get their deserts. The more I see the stronger becomes my conviction that the readiness of woman to seize the serpent's lure has cursed this mortal

race. That story of Eden is probably much nearer the truth than many of my Christian friends suppose. Perhaps she may falter yet. If she can think one thought, she is safe: the madness of flying thus at dead of night with a stranger, a man of whom she can know nothing. But folly binds her; she will come. Nothing ever balked me like last night's scene with Josephine. I wonder what it was? It seemed like death;—from fear or desire? Both are said to kill sometimes. Perhaps she feared violence and took some drug. Could I know that she possessed the soul of Lucrece, I'd turn anchorite and she should be my saint. God! how beautiful she was!"

He heard Mrs. Taine knocking on the door with her foot, and calling "Let me in!" He admitted her and relieved her of a laden tray bearing cold meat, and chicken, a beefsteak pie steaming hot, and a hot mince pie that exhaled an odor of spice and brandy.

"I must go back for the drinkables," said Mrs. Taine. "Where is Hagar?"

"She has just gone up stairs."

"Poor girl! I quite imagine how she feels, and I sympathize with her fully." She went back to the kitchen returning in a moment with a small tray containing the simmering tea-pot and a jug of chocolate.

"I must call Hagar: she'll need something after being up all night," remarked the old lady after she had served her guest.

"Please do not disturb the poor child, my dear Mrs. Taine," pleaded he, "She is very sad, and I have excused her. However, if you permit me, I will take her a cup of chocolate and anything else you think she might like."

Mrs. Taine prepared a plate, and the gallant bore it up the stairs as noiselessly as a practiced valet. He tapped gently at Hagar's door. She opened it slightly to see who was there, then let it swing half way open, and took the plate and cup from him with whispered thanks. A sweet girlish smile played about her lips as she said:

"I am nearly ready."

A small valise lay on the bed packed ready to close, and beside it her cloak and shawl. She had on her fur lined overshoes, and was tieing a warm hood when he

entered . He paused long enough to give her an encouraging smile, and to throw her a kiss from his finger tips. Whispering: "Now is your time to leave the house," he descended as quietly as he had come.

"Poor child!" he said, sympathetically, as he reentered the sitting room, "it is too bad that this should have happened to disturb her. I think she is retiring, and I trust, dear Mrs. Taine for my sake, you will not have her called until she is thoroughly rested."

"She shall have the entire day undisturbed, I will see to that. I don't intend to do much myself except rest to-day, for my nerves are completely unstrung."

While Mrs. Taine talked on with her usual animation, Mr. Lamont ate heartily, and interlarded her remarks with many comments, not more indicative of his knowledge of her weaknesses, than grateful to her pride and vanity. Presently, after having mapped out an expedition for herself and Hagar to Cincinnati, which was to end in a brilliant wedding, she drifted around to a topic which Mr. Lamont was glad to find her approaching.

Cash was a commodity which he rarely lacked: at the same time he had never found himself in possession of more than he could spend. His wants always increased in proportion to his funds, and on that one point he considered himself a wise man. She broached the subject with extreme delicacy, hoping he would not take it amiss if she insisted upon his accepting the three thousand dollars in cash which she held at his disposal, to use for himself, or for the good work in which he was engaged.

"You must promise me, my dear Benjamin, that you will call on me at any time for whatever ready money you need. I have only saved because I had no good object to spend for, and now my means are wholly at your disposal."

To her own mind it was merely bread cast on the waters, a subsidy for favors to come. Lamont, after many protests, and lavish expressions of gratitude, accepted the money, which was in the form of U. S. greenbacks, and having placed it carelessly in his pocket, rose from the table, and imprinted a most filial kiss on the old lady's forehead.

"But this is not all," she continued earnestly, "I have been to Mr. Baldwin, my lawyer, and had him make out my will, by which I leave the bulk of my property to you and your heirs forever."

In the midst of one of Lamont's most gracious and promising speeches, there was a knock at the door leading to the verandah. Mrs. Taine opened the door, and saw by the whites of two large eyes that Dan was the intruder. She called him inside and shut the door.

"All ready, Dan?" enquired Lamont.

"Yes, sah, de hoss'es done finish dere oats, sah."

"Then we must be off. Here Daniel, swallow this cup of chocolate, and you can eat the lunch your mistress has put up for you as we go along."

Wonder, doubt, and fear had done their worst for poor Dan, and he now gave Lamont the impression of a being with no more brain or humanity than a baboon. He was so dazed by the night's events that he gulped down the scalding chocolate without seeming to mind it, and glared about the room with a wild and startled look, until bidden to return to the carriage.

Mr. Lamont took a hurried but affectionate leave of Mrs. Taine, and a few minutes later he and Hagar were being driven at a rapid pace towards Cleveland.

CHAPTER XV.

A few days after Hagar's flight Dr. Taine died suddenly in his study at the Tabernacle from heart disease. He had been overcome with grief when the news first reached him that she was gone, but as the truth became more clear and he realized that in spite of his apprehensions he had permitted her to fall a victim to a scoundrel, the wound sank deeper, and reached a fatal spot when he learned that her betrayer was a rebel spy and had taken her to Canada. Mrs. Taine clung to her faith in her "dear Benjamin" up to this crisis. Then she repented her error in sackcloth and ashes, had the paper she had drawn up in favor of 'Smiles,' destroyed, and made a deed conveying the bulk of her property to James Taine if he survived the war. in case of his death it was to be devoted to the Union cause.

The dismissal of the charge against Adam Joyce was a natural result of current events. Knowing that all the prosecuting witnesses were out of reach, Mr. Amicus Fish pompously moved a nonsuit, and the court sustained the motion. The bloodless victory thus gained by circumstances for this shyster of the legal slums brought him many another such client, and from that day both he and Joyce become powers in local politics. The latter had long been distinguished as an effective "heeler" at the polls and now swore that Fish should go to Congress if he and the 'boys' had to 'clean out' the district to put him there. The 'rise' of Mr. Amicus Fish dated from this period, and was so rapid that, although he was still ignored by respectable members of the bar, he was soon very busy before the courts and made political capital by some of his achievements that promised to raise him to those golden advantages which so often fall to gentlemen of his stripe, under our glorious system of grog-shop politics.

On a bleak and dreary night in February a few days after the dismissal of Joyce, Charles Spencer, the apostle of Mormonism, arrived at Cincinnati. He had

left Cleveland about the end of December, and had come the entire distance through snow and mire on foot, preaching the 'new and everlasting covenant' at every town and village by the way in which he could obtain a hearing.

Most people regarded him with curiosity or disgust and treated him with indifference; some thought him insane and pitied him. The fanatics of other sects, and the idle ruffians of country villages who were on the lookout for diversion, thought him an excellent target for ridicule and snow balls, and on a few occasions talked of amusing themselves by dressing him in tar and feathers. The very few persons who were fair enough to observe him without undue prejudice, were convinced that he was an intelligent and earnest young man who had, unfortunately, gone clean astray from truth and common sense. He was doubtless sincere, they said, else why did he tramp through the country at that inclement season to teach his doctrines, existing upon the charity of chance acquaintances to whom his missionary character was his only introduction.

To him that wintry tour through Ohio had proved a great hardship, and the simple fact that he had accomplished it argued well for the fervency of his faith and the strength of his resolution. In winter time Ohio is a dismal land for a man without money, home or friends. Long stretches of prairie and wood-lands had to be traversed where there was no broken track to mark the road through the deep snow, and the towns were often so far apart that the distance from one to another could not be covered between daylight and dark if the traveller faltered, or deviated from his path. On one occasion he went astray on a by-road in a heavy belt of timber just as night was coming on, and was obliged to pass the night, hungry, weary and enfeebled as he was, there in the leafless forest where all around wore the aspect of death.

Several times during his journey he had been nearly famished, when, failing to find a stranger who would offer him shelter and food, he had crawled into a hayloft or a cow-shed with fodder for his bed and a handful of corn his only fare. But these exigencies neither surprised nor discouraged him, for he had assumed at

the commencement of his mendicant career, that he must face everything, even martyrdom itself, if need be, in defense of the great truths he was sent to teach. Therefore, through all his trials he hugged himself serenely, drawing vast comfort from the conviction that never failed him, that he was a man apart, who was doing all this for the Gospel, the real and only divine religion, and for heaven's own great latter day prophet. He even succeeded in converting and baptizing a few persons in the course of his dreary pilgrimage and they subsequently sold their homes and moved to "Zion in the mountains" in fulfillment of the behests of the new religion.

And at last, weary and footsore, much emaciated by want, and hardened by exposure, he had arrived at the metropolis of southern Ohio where he proposed laboring during the remainder of his mission. For the past month he had been without news or advice from either friends or superiors, but hoped to find letters awaiting him at the post-office. Meanwhile, however, he was penniless and had nothing of value on which a dollar or the fractional part of one could be raised. It was nearly nine o'clock and a pitchy darkness hung over the suburbs of the city through which he was making his way more dead than alive. His clothing had been wet through by a rainy sleet which poured down upon him some hours previously, and the frosty night wind had turned his jacket into ice and chilled him to the marrow. His boots, which were the worse for wear, were as hard as wood, and his pantaloons to a point above his knees were frozen to his legs; the mud and sleet being matted upon them in icy cakes. He had not eaten what might be called a meal since the morning of the preceding day since when he had walked some thirty miles on a diet of crusts and a few ears of dried corn.

In the hope of finding a hospitable door he had approached two or three houses during the afternoon; but from each the men were evidently absent, and the women, taking alarm at his desperate appearance, shut the door in his face without waiting to hear his errand. Though these good people could not have had the slightest idea of his real calling, he resign-

edly bore their treatment as another affront to his religion, and stalked forward with grim determination sustained by the hope of meeting with better luck in the town. The slights which had nearly brought him to the last stage of his endurance, he sneeringly designated in the mental colloquy that he kept up as he went along, as examples of 'christian charity' It did not occur to him that the country was infested with deserters and stragglers from both armies, and by spies, renegades and nondescripts of various kinds who had committed many depredations, and that he, good saint though he undoubtly was, greatly resembled one of these vagabonds, who was likely to cut a throat or a purse as occasion might demand.

His situation was desperate. He knew nothing about the city in which he was wandering like a lost sheep, and yet it was essential that he should find shelter at once. All around him were the mansions of the rich, and he still had presence of mind enough to realize how fruitless would be an application for help at one of their doors. On the contrary, he knew that the place for a man in his condition to seek relief was in some squalid quarter where the people had nothing to lose and were, in consequence, not afraid of doubtful looking intruders. He pressed on as well as he could, but his steps became slower and he was falling into a reverie: How quickly the rich man's door is bolted against the angel in disguise on the pretext of shutting out a robber-; but his punishment is that his pride of gold effectually prevents him from discerning an angel no matter in what guise it might appear. His musing was interrupted by a passer by jostling rudely against him. The Mormon turned and tried to ask the way to the river front, feeling instinctively that there among the sons of toil he would find at least a warm shelter and a crust of bread. But the man hurried on as if afraid of him. The next one he met did the same, and as he stood waiting at a corner with the wind whistling through his frozen garments, a strange indifference took possession of him; he walked on a few paces, looking up at the cheerful lights that gleamed through richly curtained bay-windows, and listening to strains of music or the notes of happy voices that spoke in melody of the

comforts and delights of home. He felt his blood grow warm under these cheering influences, and crouched nearer to the iron railings to catch the tones of a sweet voice that seemed familiar.

Yes, it was the very song his little Mormon sweetheart had sung for him the day he left "Zion;" and with this belief a dreamy sensation stole over him and he thought he was near her home on a balmy summer night. He could smell the fragrant locust blossoms, and see the pretty night-hawks floating in the moonlight above the trees! He sank down in the snow near the carriage steps wrapped in seraphic peace. He was freezing to death.

He had lain there nearly a quarter of an hour, when a Brougham drew up at the same steps. The horses snorted and pranced restlessly, and refused to approach. A footman jumped down from beside the driver, and taking them by the bits with a gentle but firm "whoa!" tried to lead them up to the landing. Still they plunged and snorted as if afraid. One of the carriage windows was now lowered and a handsome woman looked out, calling to the coachman:

"Are you blind, Tom? Don't you see there's a man lying by the steps? The horses are frightened to death. Stop at the next steps and we will get out there."

The driver obeyed, and the two ladies alighted at a neighbor's landing and hurried back to their own to see if they knew the man in the snow.

"Strike a match, Tom," said the one who had spoken from the carriage, "and see if you know his face. We must send word to the police, for the poor devil will freeze if he stays here."

The young negro did as directed and started back as if he had seen a ghost.

"Oh! Lord, Missus Clare," he exclaimed, springing to his feet, "he's done frozen stone dead already!"

"A man dead at my gate! Is he white?"

"Yes 'um—black an' white—skin like chalk, ha'r an' beard like tar."

The missionary was lying in the deep snow near the curbstone, and the women stood on the cleared walk several feet from him.

"What shall we do, Ida?" asked the same woman of

her companion who seemed to regard the circumstance with utter indifference, and to be thinking only of getting inside the warm house.

"Why, let him alone of course," she answered. "We don't keep a coroner's office or the city dead house. I'm nearly froze to death, myself; so come in. Send Tom to tell the police if you like, but don't worry yourself about an unknown sot—he don't belong to our set."

"What does he look like, Tom?" insisted the other woman.

"Looks a poor man 'bout de clo's—but 'bout de face he 'pars to me like a gemman."

The woman plunged through the snow and stooped over the prostrate form while Tom struck matches to light up the features.

"Why, Ida!" she exclaimed, "he is positively handsome—and a stranger too, who has come from a long tramp. Poor fellow! we must carry him inside. I expect he is a deserter who has escaped from battle to meet this horrid fate." With the matches still burning, she turned his head to one side to see if there was any mark of foul play, and as she did so the frozen man sighed distinctly. Tom was frightened: the woman was not.

"He's not dead, and there's no smell of liquor on his breath, so he can't be drunk. There's been foul play, that's certain. Quick, Tom—run to the house and fetch Jerry to help you carry him in—and tell one of the girls to bring a brandy flask. Hurry or we'll be too late!"

Tom bounded away, and the woman knelt by the stranger and began chafing his hands and temples. Ida grew impatient and would have gone into the house only that she feared it would not be good policy. But she had not long to wait: The two stalwart young negros raised the man to their shoulders as if he had been a sack of shavings, and bore him into the house.

As this unexpected procession entered, several persons crowded to the door.

"Oh! Dr. Cavin, I'm so glad you are here to-night; there will be a chance for you to try your skill at saving life," cried M'me. Clare Adamanti in a tone of raillery, with an emphasis on the verb.

"If I succeed it will be my second case, at least," re-

plied a small gray bearded man with eye-glasses, "for you must admit that I once saved the life of my dear Lady Clare."

"Yes, Soppy my boy, that's so; and if you save this young fellow I'll forgive you for it—there now!"

"I shall do my best, for your sake, Lady Clare, but if you have brought me a dead patient to experiment upon, I shall send you the bill."

Dr. Cavin hastened up to the room where Tom and Jerry had carried the stranger, and shortly afterward sent word to Lady Clare that he believed the man might be restored by careful treatment.

The other persons flocked into the drawing room to hear Lady Clare's account of her windfall.

"Who is he?" asked several voices in chorus.

"Likely a case of small-pox," said Ida, ill-humoredly, and in a voice so low that her superior did not notice her.

"He is the son of a rich old Yankee, who, having grown weary of camp life at this time of year, was on his way home to his mother, (probably without leave) when he took an overdose of frost and laid him down to die at my gate. It is solely because I know him to be so rich a prize that I have taken him in. If Soppy brings him to—and he says its merely a case of suspended animation induced by too much cold externally applied—why, we shall get at least ten thousand dollars for salvage; don't you see? Ha! ha! ha!"

They all knew that she was mocking them, and continued to make merry over the affair until she wheeled around abruptly and left the room. This conduct seemed to excite no surprise, for it had been understood for some time among the frequenters of "Castle Adamant," (as her house was called) that she was becoming more peculiar every day.

"I did n't approve of Aunt Clare bringing the man into the house," said Ida. "But all that about prize-money is sheer rubbish; she knows no more about the man than you do, but she is a very kind hearted woman, and that accounts for what she has done. I think it's foolish; but the house is hers, you know."

Thanks to a sound constitution Spencer mended rapidly. The first two or three days he suffered intensely;

but thenceforward he was free from pain except what he experienced from his left foot, which was badly frozen.

Each day Lady Clare paid him a visit, and her orders were strict that he was to have every comfort and attention which her house and servants could supply. When the doctor said he was well enough to talk, she asked him if he wished to send word to any of his friends, or if there was anything he would like procured from outside. This was probably meant as a delicate hint that he would be none the worse for slight additions to his wardrobe; but he only replied that he would thank her to send to the post office for his mail.

Jerry was immediately despatched with a note to the postmaster, and returned with quite a budget of letters and parcels, among the latter being two Wells, Fargo express packages containing money. Here was conclusive evidence that the young man had somebody who cared for him, and various members of the household, including Ida, took considerably more stock in him after Jerry's flourishing account of the big bundle of letters and money he had brought from the post office.

Spencer was delighted to receive news from home, and good counsel and approval from the President of the mission. He was also pleased to get the cash; though its amount was meagre enough, it seemed a small fortune to him. He found Jerry discreet, intelligent, and obliging, and entrusted him with a large part of his capital to invest in a suit of ready made clothes, and other apparel; and when the boy returned with his purchases, Spencer was obliged to admit that he had managed much better than he could have done himself.

During his stay of nearly two weeks under her roof nothing transpired to give his hostess any real clue to his identity or his profession, and the only information he had gained concerning her was what the negro boys had casually given out—that she was a wealthy Southern lady from New Orleans who had moved to Cincinnati on account of her health only a few months before the breaking out of the war. The postmark "Chicago" on his letters had been taken as indicating his place of residence; but the fact was that they received that

mark by being forwarded from the Mormon agency there. As he improved in health and began to think once more of launching forth in pursuit of candidates for the only true religion, a lively curiosity to know more about him was awakened in the breasts of certain members of the household. But he was resolved to keep his secret until the hour of his departure, when he would tell Madame Adamanti all that it was necessary for her to know.

He had been introduced to Ida, who was presented as "Miss Benner, my niece," by his hostess, early in his convalescence; and more recently to Miss Alice Benner, Ida's younger sister, Miss Belle Ross, a dear friend and school-fellow of the nieces, and several other young ladies, as well as a number of rakish looking young men who were regular visitors. He was at first puzzled and then astounded by the motley gatherings he encountered there; but he asked no questions and determined to get away as soon as possible.

The graceful but ignorant Ida had been remarkably assiduous in her attentions to the Elder ever since the arrival of the money parcels, and one evening told him flatly that she had taken a decided fancy to him the very first time she saw him. His teeth were regular and good and his breath free from tobacco or other disagreeable taint—things which the coquette had carefully noted. He seemed merry too in this company; shared the card-table and the wine with cheerful cordiality, justly priding himself on his science as well as his exceptional good luck at seven-up, euchre, and poker, and halting at the first glass of wine with ever on i tent firmness. He was truly the apostle of a "new dispensation."

One evening shortly before his intended departure from "Castle Adamant" he was sitting alone in the snug little parlor adjoining his bedroom reading a Mormon paper and nursing his frozen foot, when he heard a gentle tap at the door. It was Ida. She partly opened the door and with affected shyness, said:

"May I come in, Mr. Spencer?" By the time she had finished the words, she was standing beside him.

"I knew you was alone," she continued gayly, "so I thought I'd come and see if you would'nt like me to play for you."

It would have been awkward even for a saint to say no to such a proposition, and Spencer was too fond of music of any kind to miss a chance of hearing it. He therefore assured her of his gratitude for her thoughtfulness, and promised to listen attentively as long as she cared to play. But it was evident even to him that this arrangement did not meet her expectation. She seated herself at the piano, however, and dashed off a light operatic melody. The Elder lolled back in his easy chair and dreamily closed his eyes, as if to detract nothing by the exercise of the other senses from the divine sensation. Miss Benner continued to play, though greatly exasperated by his insensibility. She said afterwards that she had never seen a man so nearly resembling a clam. The more rapturous she endeavored to make the music the deeper seemed to grow his lethargy; so she stopped short in the middle of one of her most ravishing selections, and exclaimed in a tone of disgust:

"Good lord, Mr. Spencer! have you gone to sleep!

The Elder was startled by this explosion, and protested most earnestly that he was listening with the greatest attention, and had only closed his eyes to enjoy the music the more—to render the illusion more complete. His thoughts had been far away among the Rocky Mountains—but she had no idea what he meant. He waked up sufficiently to offer a well-turned compliment on her performance, and asked her if she sang, adding that he heard a superb voice singing in that house on the night of his arrival at Cincinnati, and before he fell unconscious at Madame Adamanti's gate.

"I sing?" cried Ida dubiously. "Well, not much, my voice might do for singing "water-cresses!" But it could'n't'a been me, anyhow, for I was at the theatre with Aunt Clare. And, do you know, it was a good thing for you it was a poor play that night?—by a Yankee, of course, a Boston Yankee, so we left after the second act. And if we had'n't, you'd 'a been under the sod two whole weeks ago. What do you think of that? You can ask Aunt Clare if it ain't so."

This was Spencer's first real tete-a-tete with Miss Benner, and the opinion he had formed from meeting

her casually in other company was not enhanced by her language and manner on this occasion. To tell the truth she was rather too much for his comprehension and he was beginning to study out a suitable plan for getting rid of her. But what was his surprise when she suddenly came up to him, gave him a sharp slap on the shoulder, and demanded:

"Who and what are you, anyhow?"

The Elder did not wish to appear angry with the pretty little vixen, so he replied in a mild voice:

"I think I have already told you, Miss Benner, that I, and all my friends, are in sympathy with the South."

"Oh, you know very well I don't mean that!" she replied, stamping her foot impatiently. "You have fooled us all, even to Aunt Clare, and I've made up my mind to find you out: I want to know what you do, and where you're from."

"Excuse me, Miss Benner. You will admit that I am not responsible for my presence in your aunt's house?"

"Well, does that prevent you from being kind to a poor girl who is dying of curiosity," she asked, catching a corner of her handkerchief in her teeth, and eying him pettishly.

"I should be glad to oblige you, Miss Benner, but I think I am not at liberty to state any further details about myself until I leave here (which will be in a day or two), when I shall explain my case fully to your aunt."

"Oh, do tell me, Mr. Spencer; I won't say a word to anybody," she cried, and at the same moment threw her arms around his neck, and added in impressive tones—"Won't you trust me—won't you trust Ida!"

The astonished saint made a highly commendable effort to disengage himself from the tender embrace of the would-be enchantress, but the state of his frost-bitten foot would not admit of a vigorous physical demonstration, and she clung so tightly that he gave up the struggle, saying, quietly:

"You are exceedingly friendly, Miss Benner, and I appreciate your kindness, but as I am already engaged I really must not permit myself—"

He could say no more. Miss Benner, uttered two or three shrill yells and almost gave him lock-jaw by coming down in a heap on his lap. The healing of his poor

foot was indefinitely delayed by that young lady's bad manners; but at this moment he was relieved by the timely appearance of Dr. Esop Cavin and Miss Ross. "What's the matter, Ida dear?" demanded Miss Ross with well feigned anxiety.

Miss Benner made no reply, but seemed to be sobbing and pressed her face against the Elder's shoulder. Spencer, though greatly embarrassed, half suspected that this was a preconcerted trick, and begged them to take Miss Benner away as she was crushing his foot. The intruders laughed covertly at the mirth-provoking tableau, and Miss Ross drew Ida away, saying scornfully.

"Come, my dear, we will leave Dr. Cavin to deal with this young man."

Spencer stammered something by way of protest, but the ladies withdrew, and the doctor was left to deal with him.'

"Well, Spencer, I'm waiting. What have you to say for yourself?" asked Dr. Cavin, sitting down with his hands in his pockets, his legs extended, and glancing curiously at the Elder.

"Nothing," he replied, briefly.

"Oh! oh! Nothing, eh? And you are soon to leave us, I understand?"

"That is my intention, unless one of these young ladies crushes the life out of me before I get started."

"I should like to ask you in what light you view your conduct towards Miss Benner, compromising her as you have done?"

"Perhaps you would like to ask what I think of her conduct towards me, compromising me as she has done!" retorted the Mormon with a touch of his native vim.

"That's very good indeed! Excellent, ha! ha!" said the Dr. with a dry, forced laugh. "I see you are a wag, Spencer a natural born wag, a fellow who wasn't would never have put it that way. But it won't do, you know, there are proprieties which—which we must all observe—"

"I would advise you to try your lecturing powers on Miss Benner. I never met with a better subject for a professor of propriety to practice upon!"

"A touch of the old Adam in him too! Still blaming

the woman," observed the doctor wisely. "But there's not a bit of use of our getting out of temper, not the least in the world. I'm your friend: I have saved your life, with the aid, of course,—the very efficient aid—of the ladies here, who have evinced towards you, the most extraordinary devotion. But, I may say, must say, in fact, that we are all considerably surprised, astounded, in short, at your conduct on the eve of your departure. There must, of course, be some reason, best known to yourself, why you have been so careful to conceal all particulars about your calling and your family. Your education and intelligence denote that you are well-connected, and have enjoyed good social advantages. The extent of your mail, and the reception by you of money parcels at various times, all point to the conclusion that your people are rich and high-toned, as well as very fond of you. But further than this meagre outline, we are wholly in the dark, and we consider that this silence on your part is hardly a proper return to people who have been so pre-eminently your benefactors, and specially in view of—of the—the familiar attitude you have assumed towards a certain member of——of the family."

Spencer smiled and looked so interested that the doctor continued talking with renewed vigor until he had nearly exhausted his stock of cheap moral precepts.

"No," said he, at last, "there is nothing so essential for a young man as to avoid even the appearance of equivocation in word or action." He paused and began to fumble in his coat pockets. I certainly had that little account in one of my pockets! Ah! that's it—there it is—my little bill for medical attendance to yourself," said he, holding the slip of paper towards the Mormon, "you will observe that my charges are extremely moderate."

Spencer took the bill, and it almost took away his breath to perceive that it was for $50.

The impecunious Elder had seen from the first that he was the subject of a good deal of speculation, and had been inwardly amused in contemplating the probable effect when he should make his confession. He now realized that he had not lost anything by postponing the denouement. He assured the doctor that the matter

should have his attention, and the latter withdrew, saying he would come back to have a further conversation with his patient, after he had dressed for the theatre.

Spencer was still suffering with his foot, but his new dilemma now filled the chief place in his thoughts. That bill for $50 floored him altogether. The total sum he had received in the parcels that had produced so much comment, was exactly $65, which had come in three separate instalments, and the first of which containing $20 had been mailed at Salt Lake in November, about three months before it reached him. Nobody but himself could realize the sacrifice and self-denial that had enabled his poor mother to send him even that small sum! She had earned it by doing the washing of officers at Camp Douglas, and had stinted herself in every way that her boy might have it to help him to 'spread the gospel.' How keenly and vividly this fact occurred to him that night. And now more than two thirds of the treasure earned by her dear toil was demanded by this quack—and for what?

He had never had any experience with doctors nor seen one of their bills before. In "Zion" he was accustomed to see a combination of faith, poultices, castor oil, and catnip-tea, as applied gratis by some old woman, work miracles of healing; or, when these failed, and the patient died of a simple malady for want of proper treatment, it was 'the will of the Lord,' and "Zion" prospered as usual.

He probably could not fully realize the narrowness of his late escape from death, and he felt a vague sense of jealousy for the Lord that a doctor had stepped in to share with Him the honor of having restored His servant! There was something out of joint with a doctor in the case, anyhow; but what was he to do about that $50?

It was in truth a serious matter. The young man had no means of his own to draw upon; in those days the church allowed nothing to its missionaries, and his father was only a clerk in the tithing office at Salt Lake drawing a salary of one thousand dollars a year in potatoes, carrots and other farm products, and having three wives and their numerous progeny to whose support he felt in duty bound to contribute. Never-

theless, the Elder did not despair of coming out of his difficulty without being badly damaged. He had been "dragged up" in a hard school, was accustomed to scaling obstacles, and above all he was at all times inspired by a firm conviction that "the Lord would see him through." *

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* Let not the reader suppose that any disrespect, either to the Deity or to the Mormon Elder, is intended by the apparently trivial use made above of a sacred name. Whatever the merit, or otherwise, of this peculiarity of the Mormon character, it is a genuine characteristic. At the period of which I am writing, it was so common a habit among them to talk in this way that it had ceased to be cant and became a household word. Boys of twelve or fourteen would talk about the number of fish the Lord would enable them to catch. The younger copied from the elder, and the Deity became to the average Saint—as has been the case among many other sects—a sort of superior kind of familiar spirit, who possessed great power either to help or harm, according to His caprice. As late as the period at which the Union Pacific Railroad was completed—1869—there was a common belief among a large portion of the rising generation of Salt Lake City, which they had, of course, imbibed from their seniors, that Brigham Young would continue to preach and to lead the people until he attained the age of one hundred years, when the Lord would restore him to a young and vigorous manhood, and he would become, by the Lord's direct help, ruler over the entire United States. It was an unwonted freak of modesty that caused them to stop short of the whole world.

CHAPTER XVI.

In the evening Dr. Cavin told the Elder that Lady Clare expected him to take a hand at euchre in the drawing room. Spencer at first declined, but on second thought decided to avail himself of a last opportunity to observe the life and the characters at Castle Adamant. He had fully determined to make his adieux next day, to escape, if possible, the bill of Dr. Cavin, and the rudeness of Miss Benner. He rightly believed that they had been playing him a trick to which his hostess was not a party.

In the course of his stay Spencer had never seen the drawing room look so brilliant as it did on this occasion. The room was large and luxuriously furnished, and a hundred gas-jets flung down their light from the great central chandelier of prismatic glass through crystal shades of many hues. The entrance was through a wide double door-way at one side of the room, so that, upon entering, a full survey of the apartment was had by a glance to the right and left. At either end were marble fireplaces in which were open fires of pink flamed anthracite, partially concealed by embroidered screens of Chinese silk and Mexican feather-work. On the walls hung a few choice paintings which Madame Adamanti had bought in Paris some years previously, and a portrait of herself by Healy, which looked very little like her now, but had been a striking likeness ten years before, when she had not only been called the 'handsomest woman in New Orleans,' but had ranked, during her stay abroad, among the dashing beauties of the French Capital. Mirrors, flowers, rich artistic porcelains, and small groups of statuary, tastefully arranged and displayed, completed the decoration of the room. But the brilliant ensemble was not a little enhanced by the fashionably dressed occupants, who were few, but just numerous enough to give animation to the scene. Madame and Miss Benner sat near a flower-decked table, busily occupied with their embroidery, and

near them stood two or three gallants, who seemed in a lively mood, but who took good care to betray no signs of impropriety in Madame's presence, as she had issued a decree against it, and would admit no person to her house who did not respect her wishes. Alice and Miss Ross, with two other young women, all of whom wore superb toilets, were amusing other visitors at the further end of the apartment, and Spencer paused on the threshold as his foot pressed the thick velvet carpet, deeply impressed with the strange, dazzling glamor of the scene.

Lady Clare received him kindly, and noting that he drew back as if disinclined to enter, she went to him. saying in a tone friendly, but not loud enough to be heard by her companions:

"Come in my dear boy; you are as safe here as at home. You need not dread these dandies because they are well-dressed; you are my guest, and I am old enough to disregard, and influential enough, right here, to make acceptable, the cut of your coat. So come and make yourself happy. We shall give them a lesson at Euchre after awhile." She made the first remark laughingly, and, taking him by the arm, drew him to a seat beside her table.

Dr. Cavin looked at his watch, and finding that it was eight o'clock, excused himself with the remark that he must be off for the theatre at once. But Ida ran to him and detained him with a confidential discourse. The intolerable little prig looked sleek and spruce in his black dress suit, with dazzling linen protruding some four inches at his wrists and nearly two inches at his neck; with his hatchet face shaven, the mustache and imperial (which were heavy enough for a man of three times his bulk) scrupulously dyed and waxed, and the costly eye-glasses which he wore, not that they assisted his sight, but because he thought they made him look so wise, dangling at his lapel.

There was no introducing at Castle Adamant. Each visitor approached and spoke to whom he chose. Spencer, therefore, was soon drawn into conversation by some of the sports, who took him for a countryman and casual caller at the "Castle." Lady Clare whispered to him that he must not enlighten them, as they would

shortly have an opportunity to test his skill at the card table. There was nothing now in which she took so much interest as gaming, and her attachment to Spencer was on that account; for, while he would not gamble himself, he did not mind playing as her partner, and she had never before had such exceptionally good luck at play. They were arranging for a game, and Dr. Cavin was hurrying away to the theatre, when Jerry came in with a card for Madame.

"Wait a bit, Soppy," said she, beckoning to the doctor. As she went towards him with the card in her hand, he came back to meet her. He glanced at the card which bore, in lead pencil, the legend—"Rev. B. T. Smiles and wife," and raised is eyebrows knowingly.

"I must wait, then, and see him. Confound the fellow, I've lost all sorts of things on his account, and may lose my head yet."

Jerry was directed to show the visitors in, and Madame waited at the door of the drawing-room to greet them.

"Don't forget to call him 'Smiles,'" said she, as the doctor left her and proceeded to lose his miniature body amongst the group far down the room.

A moment later Lamont and Hagar were ushered in, and Lady Clare received them with cordiality. She was much struck with the perfect innocence and grace of her old friend's latest victim, and quite forgot the game she was about to play, in the new born, but intense interest which the guileless young thing had instantly awakened. Her cold gray eyes surveyed the girl again and again. Yes, it was certain, as Lamont had reported: the girl was refined, well-bred, and pure-minded, a combination for which she had been seeking ever since she left New Orleans, but without success. And was it now possible that this bold and unscrupulous man, whom she had always regarded as a very devil incarnate (while she could not help admiring his skill and address), had placed within her grasp a means of final escape from the life she loathed but could not flee?

"It is true!" she muttered to herself, as she left Hagar's side after a few moment's conversation. "I shall escape now! With her in my power and obedient to my will, I can face the world anywhere as a new woman.

Her innocence will shield me. My gold shall protect and prosper her. It is well then; for, at last, after living abroad, travelling, scouring the earth with her to convince her of my goodness and my bounty, I shall bring her back, restore her to her friends, and so breathe my last breath in untainted air beneath a respectable roof."

Spencer had sauntered towards the farther side of the saloon, amusing himself with the works of art, and only caught a side-glance of the new arrivals, whom he did not recognize. They were quickly surrounded by members of the company who appeared to be acquainted with Lamont, so that Lady Clare's momentary agitation escaped notice.

Hagar looked a little older, attired as she was in an ultra fashionable costume of brown silk. She met the friends of Charles Lamont with as much heartiness as they effected towards her. She told Lamont that she had never seen a house so nicely appointed, or women so elegantly dressed; and took him to task for not telling her that his friends were so wealthy and aristocratic. Their familiarity with him somewhat surprised, but did not offend her; and though she was at first embarrassed by the close scrutiny of the women, she soon felt perfectly at ease, and conversed with an ingenuousness which was decidedly novel within those walls.

Mr. 'Smiles' was scarcely recognizable. His light hair and mustache had been dyed jet black before leaving Canada, and the beard he had grown since quitting Chestnut Grove, was of the same hue. His dress was that of a well-to-do business man in excellent taste. He had thrown off his over-coat in the hall, so that his robust and symmetrical figure, which had always formed one of his chief attractions with women, was exhibited to the best advantage, as he had, no doubt, intended. But his disguise was so complete that none but a clever detective could have penetrated it, for besides the changes above alluded to, the peculiarly fair skin of his face, neck, and hands, had been given a dark tinge, and he had put on a pair of colored glasses when he entered the saloon. Mme. Adamanti had expected him, and had put those who knew and were interested in screening him, on their guard.

Miss Ross, who had been watching her opportunity, soon succeeded in drawing Lamont aside to ply him with questions about the stranger. In the earlier stages of her career at New Orleans she had been on very friendly terms with Lamont, and now regarded herself as privileged to say to him what he would have resented as impertinence from most women. He seemed to admit her claim most readily, and to accord his full sympathy and attention to her coarse and impudent raillery.

"What is she, Charlie, a preacher's daughter, or a banker's pet ward? Say, what's her name, and where did you get her?—do tell me all about it," she pleaded, leaning on his arm and leading him apart.

"I call her 'Kitty,—she has no other name."

"She's very tony and stuck-up, I'm sure, and I wish you hadn't brought her here. But go on; tell me about her. Anybody can see she's not out of the gutter, and I just want to know how you came by her." She had by this time cornered him on a soft divan in a window recess, where he amused her with a romantic little story invented for the occasion.

Meanwhile the attention of Madame Adamanti was engrossed with Hagar, whose sweet and gentle manner charmed her as nothing had ever done before. And when Lamont rejoined the group, with the remark that they had only dropped in for a moment on their way to the theatre, and must be going at once, Madame took occasion to say that she hoped to have the pleasure of a more intimate acquaintance with his young wife.

Their movement had attracted the attention of Miss Ross, and those with her; and they came forward with their glasses in hand. A general laugh followed and as Lamont turned to make some gallant remark to Miss Ross, his eyes met those of the Mormon Elder, who was standing beside her. Though considerably changed by the growth of hair on his face, Spencer was recognized instantly; but he was not yet aware of Hagar's presence, and, therefore, did not imagine that he was so near his old friend, the "Rev. Mr. Smiles."

For reasons he could hardly have explained Lamont was somewhat startled by the Mormon's proximity, and as he made his way back to where Hagar stood talking to Lady Clare, though he seemed as lively and buoyant as ever, he was muttering savagely to himself:—

"What devil's message has brought that Mormon here!"

When he came near enough to touch Hagar's elbow, he said:

"Come, Kitty, we must really be off. Lady Clare will excuse us, I am sure." Then having drawn her a little aside, he continued in a subdued voice:

"I see that the Mormon, Spencer, is here. If he should recognize you, you must ignore him. We will go at the earliest moment."

Hagar had already begun to feel uncomfortable. She knew instinctively that there was something unwholesome in this place, and about the people she met here; and now the peremptory anxiety of her husband made her tremble. She had not failed to note, also, the strange hilarity of Lamont, and though she endeavored to ascribe, what she could scarcely regard as less than impropriety, to his talent (of which he boasted), for adapting himself to any and every class of society and surroundings, she was not satisfied.

"Yes," she cried, anxiously, "do take me home, Benjamin; I do not like this place."

He turned away, saying he would rejoin her in a moment. He and Lady Clare then paced slowly down the room together, engaged in earnest conversation. As he withdrew, some of the strange men spoke to her, but she found herself unable to show any interest, and gazed about in a bewildered and abstracted manner, almost ready to cry, like a child, who suddenly realizes that it is lost. Spencer had been attracted by something familiar he had detected in a side-view of her face, and by shifting his position a little, was astonished to find that it was Hagar. He was about hurrying forward to speak to her, when he noticed that she gave him a curious look and turned her face the other way. It was so palpable a cut that there was no mistaking its meaning; but, though keenly sensitive to the slight, Spencer moved away with the reflection that she was of the world, worldly; and that her ungraciousness and ingratitude would surely hurt herself more than him. He had read the accounts in the newspapers of her flight with 'Smiles,' alias Lamont, and now realized for the first time that her blonde betrayer was transformed into

the dark man who had just left her. And though he knew, from the press reports, that this polished villain was a secret agent of the rebellious chiefs whom he and his people honored as the avengers of the Deity, he at once determined to track him, and, if possible, to deliver him into the hands of the law, that he might be punished for his detestable crimes.

"The doctor wants to speak with you before you go," said Lady Clare to Lamont, as they went along.

"But I have no time to waste now upon our 'Esop the wise.' I should shrewdly conjecture that he has no news with which 'my Lady' is not familiar?"

"Oh, yes; I can tell you if you prefer. Your wife and children have arrived at New York, by steamer, on their way to this city."

Lamont stopped as suddenly as if he had been paralyzed in every nerve.

"Nonsense!" he exclaimed. "It is impossible! I had letters from her at Cleveland, and the last received in Hamilton, Ontario, told of the severe illness of her mother, at whose bedside she was constantly detained. But what news has the doctor received on this subject?" he anxiously inquired, moving on slowly as before.

"It only came to-day, and I thought Soppy better tell you about it fully. He mentioned merely the fact to me, but he has a letter from Colt with full details. You remember, you instructed Colt several months ago, to communicate to him any facts that might serve you if he was unable to send me word direct; and it seems that both letters and telegrams regarding your wife's move have been sent and lost. Colt is determined to shield you, while doing his best for his mistress; but it appears that she is terribly aroused by the newspaper accounts about you, and that her object in coming here is to endeavor to ascertain the truth. Her mother is dead."

"Well, here is a pretty state of things! You should have informed me of this the moment after my arrival. I have received orders to join Bragg for a special service as quickly as possible, and shall set out to-night on my journey. I had little supposed that my enterprise would receive such a damper as this! But the arrival

of my wife is not the most imminent danger. Where did you pick up that countryfied plebe in the tweed suit?"

"You know him?" asked Madame, with surprise.

"Yes, but that is not the worst of it. He knows me, and, if he should penetrate my disguise, will give the alarm before I can get out of reach. You must take care he dosen't get out of the house for at least three hours after I leave here. The address of the lodgings in Vine street is on that card. You must be sure and go there early to-morrow morning and fetch the girl away at once. I shall rely upon you and the doctor to manage Colt in such a way as to induce Catherine to return to New Orleans as early as possible. And, above all, tell him to do his best to keep the newspapers from her, for of all the damnable things in this world for causing trouble, they are the worst. My domestic affairs have always gone on with perfect harmony, and I don't care to have them disturbed now by the ravings of a lot of grovelling penny-a-liners!"

Though Lady Clare was inclined to laugh at this outburst of righteous indignation, her thoughts were too much occupied with more serious matters.

"I see that the loss of his daughter killed the poor old man. Had she a mother living?" she asked.

"No; nor was she the lawful child of old man Taine, though she may have been his own all the same. She was an orphan—a foundling——"

"But all the reports I saw spoke of her only as "Miss Taine" or as "Dr. Taine's daughter." I did not see a line about her being a foundling—not a line! But are you sure?"

"Certain! Mrs. Taine, the second, who is childless, and has been the doctor's wife for as many years as the girl is old, told me the whole story. I am surprised the scribblers did not get hold of it."

"A foundling!" said Lady Clare to herself. She was, apparently, much moved, and wished to detain Lamont with further questions, but he had turned, saying he must not lose another moment, and was going rapidly towards the saloon door.

Taking his arm she accompanied him, and asked in a whisper:

"And what is her name?"

"I call her 'Kitty,' which you will continue for my sake."

"That is merely a pet name, then? But what was her real name?"

"Oh! that's too ugly! Her mother, who drowned herself in a pond near the Taine's house, left a written request that she be called 'Hagar,' and so she was named, to appease the ghost of the suicide. Take good care of her—she is yours now, you know.'"

As he said this carelessly, he went towards Hagar, who hastened out of the group of talkers to meet him.

Madame Adamanti gasped the word 'Hagar!' in a suffocated tone, and almost swooned under a sudden pressure of emotion. But she rallied herself sufficiently to bid them 'good night,' and when they had passed into the hall, sank upon a sofa, calling somebody to bring her salts. Dr. Cavin and several others hurried to her side, but just then all present were alarmed by the sound of strange voices in the hall, and the breathless announcement of "soldiers! soldiers!" by Jerry. Spencer threw himself into a chair, exclaiming with saintly resignation.

"What next!"

But the rest of the company, including Lady Clare, who was supported by the doctor, rushed into the hall where a most unexpected tableau was presented. For a while there was considerable commotion. An officer in uniform and a picket of six Union soldiers with fixed bayonets, stood across the doorway, having entered when the bolts were drawn for Lamont and his companion to depart.

"This is our man," said the officer, pointing to Lamont, "Or will be, when we put him through a little process of scouring. Beg pardon, Miss; sorry to interrupt you so unceremoniously. But the Rev. Mr. Smiles, alias Charles Lamont, alias 'March,' and so forth, is an enemy of the Union, and a spy whom we shall be obliged to take care of. If you are the young girl he carried away from Cleveland, as appears from your prètty face and your modesty, you will hear something for your benefit at the City Hall, I think. Permit me," he said, as he locked a pair of handcuffs to Lamont's wrists.

The wily agent of the Confederacy smiled, though he felt that this would be a most appropriate occasion for him to sink through the floor, and out of sight forever. But he was partially consoled by the reflection that no papers, which could be of service to the enemy, were on his person; and the only eventuality which he really feared, was that the wife who had trusted him so implicitly and whose confidence he had rewarded by systematic and unblushing infidelity, would now discover what a villain he was. Although he had grown callous to remorse, the prospect of a punishment under the lash of her scorn and hate was not without real terror for him. He tried to say something cheering to Hagar, who clung wildly to him, before he was led away, but she was completely overcome by the shock, and was carried into the drawing room just in time to save her from falling unconscious on the floor.

CHAPTER XVII.

The morning following the arrest of Charles Lamont, there was considerable stir and anxiety among the inmates of Madame Adamanti's house, for that lady had fallen suddenly ill of an attack which the doctor pronounced brain fever. She was delirious when Miss Ross, who was the first to learn of her sickness, called in the doctor, sometime before daylight; and at about 9 A. M. Spencer met Dr. Cavin in the hall, who informed him that the fever was increasing with alarming rapidity; adding sorrowfully, that the symptoms had been so peculiar, he felt obliged to call in another physician.

"I have seen the poor kind-hearted creature brought very low by milder attacks of a similar character, but never so bad as this, and it really looks now as if the hand of Death had seized her. The excitement of last night was too severe a shock for her." The little doctor was decidedly cast down, and went away without saying a word about Spencer's bill.

Spencer also wore a long and solemn face. He justly thought that no other apostle ever found himself in exactly such a situation as that in which he was placed, and wound up the reflection with a corollary which habitually figured in his experience, to the effect that Providence had not subjected him to this trial without good and sufficient reasons. Though commonly prosaic enough, the young Elder was not without a tinge of real chivalrous feeling in his make up, beyond and above mere personal bravery. He had been thinking about Miss Taine (which was the name he always associated with Hagar) nearly all night, and trying to determine what, under the circumstances, he could do to serve her. It was evident to him that her betrayer had abandoned her to a fate which promised to be a hard and desperate one; but she had cruelly snubbed him, and would, he thought, probably tell him to go about his business if he should attempt a renewal of her acquaintance. The more he thought about the matter the less

disposed he felt to interfere, or rather the more certain he was that his good intentions would be rewarded by further slights, if not by actual indignity. His mind was, therefore, confused by a variety of ideas which were more or less conflicting. He was anxious to help Miss Taine, but could not perceive what was to be done even if she would accept his assistance; he wanted to get away from Castle Adamant, but there were the bills for medical attendance and lodging unpaid, with the hostess too ill to talk business, the doctor decidedly opposed to a compromise, and available funds at an extremely low ebb. But one thing at least, was perfectly clear. He must take some steps to prevent the aggravation of these difficulties, and he came to the sensible conclusion that that step should be across the threshold of the Castle. The rest he would leave to Providence, that infinite legatee of human misery that never sneers at the bequests of woe.

Having reached this decision he was much relieved, and at once hunted up his friend Jerry, with whom he left his small parcel of effects, to be called for when he should secure a lodging more suited to his calling and his purse. Jerry liked the Mormon because he had amused and interested him with that pretty little story about the angels and the package of gold plates, which is the foundation of Mormon faith and history. The boy was, therefore, glad to serve him, and said he was sorry he was going away. Spencer put out his hand to say 'good bye,' and the negro looked at him with astonishment; but when the Mormon assured him that he really meant to shake hands with him, he extended his hand timidly, and just as Spencer grasped it tightly in his own, Miss Benner came into the hall from the drawing room. Jerry suddenly remembered that he had duty to perform downstairs, and made a bee line in that direction.

His surprise at Mars' Spencer's sociability was of a very mild type as compared with that now portrayed on Ida's face.

"Well! I'm dashed!" she exclaimed "if I don't believe you're a Rad. and Abolitioner. The way you was fraterizin' with that nigger would a' shocked Abe Lincom hisself!"

"Good morning, Miss Benner," said the Mormon politely, "I am sorry to have caused you so much annoyance. Of course, I understand that it is not customary among white people to shake hands with the negroes; but I like Jerry, and for that matter I don't see that I need fear that the black will rub off his hands, more than he that the white will rub off mine. It's only a matter of prejudice, after all."

"Oh, everybody to their own taste. But what's it all about, anyhow? Goin' away, be you?"

"Yes; I am able to move about now, and must return to my duty. I am very sorry that your aunt's illness will prevent my seeing her to express my gratitude."

"Well, why don't you wait till she's better then," interrupted Ida.

"I dare not lose any more time. But I will come and see her when she recovers, to thank her and make her such returns as I am able for her great kindness to me. If she had known who and what I am, it is not likely she would have brought me into her house."

"Just think of that, now! cried Ida, clasping her hands together. "That Bella must be a witch, for she can read characters like a book. Are you a Catholic Priest?"

"No, Miss Benner, I belong to a new religion, or at least a new revelation of the old one."

"And what is that?"

"I am a 'Latter-Day Saint.'"

"Oh! a Saint?—a real Saint! Any relation to Saint Valentine? Ha! ha!—'A Latter Day Saint,' eh? Is that anything like a Seventh-day Baptist?"

"We are usually called by our enemies, "the Mormons."

"Mormons! Ugh!" cried she, stepping back. "Are you one of them awful polygamy savages?"

"Yes," said Spencer, shrugging his shoulders, "you have it, exactly. That is one of our pet names among our Christian friends."

"Well then, it's a good thing for you that Aunt Clare didn't know it, or she'd a left you to freeze, you can bet. She knows all about your kind o' saints, I can tell you. She's been there—What's the name of the place? Salt Creek?"

"Salt Lake?"

"Yes; I knew it was Salt something. Well, she's been there, and used to be one of the wives of a very good saint, who kept six others, an' had about forty children, an' he fed 'em all on carrots an' dressed 'em in rags; an' the only houses they had was mud shanties, with the ground for floor. Oh! I've heard Aunt Clare tell about it dozens of times. An' you're one o' their priest's, eh? Well, I never!" With this she stood back several paces from the Elder, and surveyed him curiously. It was his turn now to experience surprise of a very peculiar kind.

From the moment when he had first conversed with Madame Adamanti he was conscious of something familiar about her face, and on several subsequent occasions he found himself studying her features and trying to determine of whom it was that she always reminded him. Miss Benner's garrulity had disclosed the secret. He instantly guessed that this remarkable woman who had saved his life and was now, in all probability, upon her own death-bed, was none other than the runaway wife of a Mormon Bishop, who, for years, had been his father's neighbor and friend in the Mormon capital. It had all happened when he was a small boy, but he remembered the leading incidents perfectly, and knew that the face that had caused him so much study, was but the elder stage of one with which he had been well acquainted,—that of the Bishop's beautiful wife, Hope, who was called the 'prettiest woman in the church.'

But Ida seemed disturbed after she had said all this, and, quickly changing her voice from a tone of banter to one of supplication, she went on:

"But, say, Mr. Spencer, you won't tell Aunt Clare, or anybody else, will you? She'd never forgive me if she found out that I'd spoken of it. You won't tell her, will you?"

"Certainly not. I shall tell nobody."

The negro Tom came quietly towards them, his eyes filling with tears.

"For de Lor', Miss Ida an' Mars' Spencer," said he, "pore missus 'll 'be done gone 'fore dem doctors gits here. She's jes' sinkin' lower an' lower, an' Miss Belle's jes skeered outen her life, too—"

Spencer turned impulsively, saying that he would go out and endeavor to hurry them a little. And without a moment's hesitation, he drew on his overcoat, and sallied forth into the frosty air.

It was the first time he had been out of the house since the night he was picked up by Lady Clare half frozen. He enjoyed the sense of freedom which came back to him as he left that rich but ill-omened mansion, and having caught sight of Dr. Cavin coming with another man as he passed out at the gate, he faced the other way and increased his speed, as much as his lame foot would permit, determined that as he was well out of the place, he would not go in again.

The ugly suspicions which had lately filled his mind respecting the Castle and its occupants, were quickly crystallized into firm convictions when he came in contact with the outer air; and however seriously he was occupied with his own immediate condition and prospects, he could not for one moment ignore the peril into which poor Hagar was thrown. He must procure a lodging at once, and set to work to inform her friends of her situation.

With these and many other like reflections he wandered on through several streets, occasionally enquiring the prices at boarding houses that were beyond his means, until about the middle of the afternoon, when he came across a neat looking inn situated in a narrow street near the river front. On introducing himself to the landlord and making known something about his character, he was surprised and delighted to find that his host had been a member of the Mormon church in the palmy days of Kirtland, and still felt a friendly interest concerning the cause. He acknowledged in due form to Spencer that he believed Joseph Smith, the martyr, to have been a true prophet, and greeted the Elder as a true apostle.

To give a practical turn to his faith and friendship the landlord said:

"Why, we aint hed a 'postle in these yer parts fer a long time, an' I kin tell ye ye'r welcome. My father, ole Si Brown of Concord (he lived to 93), was a half-cousin to the Simon pure prophet, Joe Smith, and he used to know Brigham like a book, too. He'd a went over to the prophet hisself but for the old lady's in-

flooence, who was a hard-shell Baptist. An' do you tell me that you're a reg'ler Brig Young Mormon, bigamy an' all?"

Spencer assured him that he was a saint of the true stamp, and offered to show him his credentials, whereupon he opened his heart in these terms:

"Then shake! An' I'll say to you as the old man said to both your prophets when they was along our way, 'you're welcome to what I've got, free of charge.'"

Within a few days Spencer found his mission prospering beyond his most sanguine hopes. The landlord introduced him to many sympathizers, both male and female, and he found a number among them whose minds were prepared for the move to Zion. Meetings were held in their private houses, shops and factories, and so great an interest was manifested that the newspapers took up the matter.

The young saint was naturally elated by the favorable turn in his fortunes, and began to picture to himself the wholesale conversion of numberless sinners which was to result from the landlord's friendship and bounty. What a triumph it would be, he thought, if he should be enabled to join the next transcontinental caravan at the Missouri River with a company of converts from that ungodly State of Ohio, which had so cruelly persecuted the prophets and the saints.

Finally the supporters of the Elder hired the Free Chapel and held a grand public demonstration, which they called a "conference." This meeting was attended by some of the leading ministers of the city, and the following Sunday they answered the Mormon from their pulpits to the general satisfaction of their congregations.

But in the height of his prosperity and success, Spencer did not forget Hagar; in fact she was never absent from his thoughts. A few days after he quitted the castle he called there after dark to get his bundle from Jerry, and was gratified to learn that Madame had ordered that no visitors should be admitted to the house, and that the young girl they called Kitty, seemed to be pretty happy. Jerry reported further that Lady Clare was expected to die at almost any moment. Several doctors had agreed that her recovery was impossible.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"The world is the book of women."
—*Rousseau.*

One Sunday soon after Lamont's arrest, Hagar expressed a wish to go to church, and was taken by Ida to the Free Chapel, where Dr. Bruce, a popular lecturer, who had a considerable following among free thinkers and others who were not connected with any regular church, gave an interesting discourse on Mormonism. The subject had been suggested by the presence of Elder Spencer in Cincinnati, and Dr. Bruce's attendance at one of his meetings.

The Doctor denounced the Mormon pretentions judiciously, and a somewhat exciting scene was caused by Spencer making an attempt to reply to him. The Elder saw Hagar when leaving the hall, but she avoided him and hurried to the carriage.

When Hagar and Ida returned to Castle Adamant, after the service at Dr. Bruce's chapel, they were met in the hall by Miss Ross, who, in reply to Ida's enquiries about the condition of Aunt Clare, said that she had been in her right mind for two or three hours, and asked to see "Kitty."

"She seems so anxious to see you, Kitty; but the new doctor says it is only a fancy, and she must not be allowed to see anybody at present."

"I am very glad to hear that Madame Adamanti is better," Hagar said mechanically. And then, with a wistful look at Miss Ross, and about the room, she added: "Is there no news, nothing from my husband?" There was unsteadiness in her voice as she spoke, and she sat down and wept bitterly when Miss Ross replied indifferently, "No."

Hagar retired to her room, where Ida presently joined her. She had brushed away her tears, and was making an effort to be cheerful.

"I must really go to our lodgings to-morrow," she said, her sweet voice still muffled with tears. "There

may be letters there for me from my father. I have not heard a word from him, though I have written several times. The world seems dark and hopeless to me, Ida; what would you do if you were in my place? Don't you think they would let me see my husband?"

"Gracious, no! These are war times, you know, and Dr. Cavin says, the hebbus carcass act has been suspended, so they can arrest and put in jail whoever they like. But there's no use o' your fretting about Char—about your husband, cos, he's already got another wife, and you're in the fix of one of them girls Dr. Bruce was telling about. You're only a "Hagar," like the rest of us."

Hagar was startled by these strange words, and quite unable to understand them. She remembered that Dr. Bruce had spoken of the Biblical Hagar, and had a faint idea of the drift of his remarks. But her mind had been so preoccupied with her troubles, that she had not been able to follow the Doctor's thoughts. Ida spoke in a tone of heartless railery which indicated that she was for more callous than was really the case. She knelt in an easy chair, resting her elbows on the cushioned back and her chin in her palms. There she crouched watching her frightened companion grow pale. An amused smile of spiteful satisfaction was playing about her mouth. She was wondering what "Kitty" would say.

"My husband has another wife?" Hagar asked with some effort, after a moment's pause. Ida nodded maliciously.

"How do you know that? What is the meaning of all this strange acting that is going on here? Where have you known my husband?"

"At New Orleans. He was always the handsomest Knight of the Carnival."

"Why, Ida, how can you talk so? My husband resides at Boston, and is a minister of the Gospel. You are cruel to talk like this to me," said poor Hagar, her heart already half mistrustful.

"You're a little fool, Kitty. Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Ida, with palpable artifice, and going to Hagar to embrace her. "Do you mean to tell me seriously that you believe you are Charley Lamont's wife?"

"'Charley Lamont?' I do not know such a person—my husband's name is Smiles—the Reverend Benjamin T. Smiles."

Ida laughed so uproariously in response to this that Hagar could not help smiling as she said innocently:—

"You think the name so funny, then?"

"I was wondering if the "T" was for tears, for Charley always was the most terrific sport, and I reckon he's had more tears shed over him than any man out of jail, an' now he's in, too. But, see here, Kitty, let's understand each other."

"I wish I could understand you, Ida; but indeed, I don't know what you are talking about."

"Well, look here; ye didn't run away from your real husband, Smiles, to come here with Charley Lamont, did ye?"

"You know I came here with my husband. Whom do you mean by Charley Lamont?" Hagar was struggling between impatience, uncertainty, and dread. She scarcely knew what to say, but looked as puzzled as she felt.

That was him you came here with, who was taken away by old Abe's soldiers. So you see I'm right, he's the Knight of the Carnival, and the husband of one of the richest and prettiest women in New Orleans, and what's more, he's got two children."

The words of the officer who arrested Lamont now rung in Hagar's ears, and her first sense of the truth oppressed her.

"There must be some mistake!" she said, trying to control her emotion, and seizing Ida by the arm. "You are trying to deceive and alarm me, Ida. Confess that it is so. Even if my husband is a rebel spy, and if he bears a different name from that I knew him by, he has no other wife. Come, Ida, tell me you are only joking—"

"Well, you can ask Aunt Clare when she is well enough. I've only told you the truth for your own good."

Hagar did not weep. Clasping her hands over her face, she said, faintly, "Oh, what shall I do!" She reeled for an instant, but by an effort kept her feet and went unsteadily towards the door, near which, on a table, were her bonnet and wraps just as she had left

them on entering. The sight of them seemed to revive her. Hurriedly reassuming them, she rushed down the stairs and out into the street before Ida could give an alarm. The latter called Miss Ross, and after a consultation, they decided, as there was no doctor in the house, they ought to tell Aunt Clare.

The courtesan was but little better than on the day she was so suddenly stricken down by her old malady. In her delirium she had said nothing in relation to Hagar to create distrust in the suspicious minds about her; but as soon as she recovered consciousness she had asked about the girl "Kitty," with business-like solicitude, and given orders that she must not be introduced to any of the frequenters of the house. She had afterwards fallen into a stupor from which it was not supposed she would rally; but to-day she was better again, and had been saying that she was anxious to see Kitty, so that her attendents had reason to dread the shock the girl's escape might give her.

Miss Ross undertook the delicate mission, however. She was a woman of a type that is considered beautiful in some parts of the Orient. Of a dark, opaque complexion, with short blue black curls clustered about her head, she might have been taken by a casual observer, for a mulatto. She was, however, pure Creole, and possessed of personal graces and accomplishments which might have rendered her acceptable in any society.

She softly approached the bedside of Lady Clare, whose illness had already produced a significant change in her appearance, and, taking up the thin hand that lay out on the silk counterpane, said,

"You have had a nice nap, Aunt Clare? I hope you feel a little better?"

"No, Belle," replied Madame Adamanti in a whisper.

"But I am a little stronger, I think, and while I am so I want to arrange my affairs as well as possible, for I am going to die."

"Don't talk like that; it's foolish. You will be as well as ever in a day or two, I'm sure."

Miss Ross was studying how to broach the subject of the run-away girl when Lady Clare continued:—

"You remember, Belle, I once told you that I had a child, a daughter."

"Yes, the one you abandoned at Cleveland, when you ran away with the Mormons."

"Well, I have seen her: she is still alive."

Belle was so surprised that she sprang to her feet in the firm conviction that her mistress was drifting away again into the dreary realms of delirium.

"You needn't be afraid, I was never more sound in my reason than at the present moment. The girl brought here the other night by Charles Lamont is my daughter."

"Impossible! He told me he got her in Canada."

"His treachery has brought her to me, but no matter about that, it shall not bring her to any further harm if I can prevent it. To leave no doubt in the matter I want you to go at once and see Lamont. I have a pass to the military prison. Tell him that for special reasons, valuable to him as well as to me, I want to know all the facts he can give about the girl's history, her parentage, age and every detail he can supply. Tell him I am ill or I should have come myself. In the pocket of the dress I had on the night he was here you will find a card he gave me. On it is the address of the lodgings where all the girl's luggage and some property belonging to Lamont, were left. Oh! What would I give, Belle, for an hour's conversation this day with some honest man, who would think nothing of what I am, but hear my confession, and only regard me as what I might have been. I must find somebody to take care of that poor girl. And I suppose some conceited hypocrite of a lawyer is my only alternative."

"Why don't you send for a priest? That's what I'd do if I were in your frame of mind," said Miss Ross rather absently, dreading more than ever the shock to her mistress when she should learn of Kitty's flight.

"No, no; I don't want one of those gentry with their sanctimonious deceit. He would probably offer me absolution if I would leave him my fortune. When we approach death, no matter what our lives have been, we crave for the presence of some one whose record is such as our better conscience approves. Ours is the bitterest fate of all, Belle; the most vile, the most repulsive. We may get beyond shame, but we sink deeper and deeper into the miseries of a living death, and go

about as mere moving corpses for years before we reach the grave. I am not sorry I am nearing the end. I am just thirty-seven years old, but I am treble that in suffering and sin. As the last act in my tragedy, I was conniving at the shame of my own child!..... But there, I must let you go. And yet, something tells me I should send for somebody to whose care I can leave the girl. There is not one among the mass of men I know whom I would trust with such a commission. I must see the poor child, too, and talk with her before I die. She can never know who or what I was. For whom shall I send, Belle? I may not feel so well another day. I have not a moment to lose."

"I think you ought to send for a priest; no better man than my confessor, Father O'Rouke, could be found in Cincinnati; or else for a sister of charity."

"That my child may be robbed, and forced into a nunnery? I may as well consign her to the Mormons at once!"

"You are prejudiced, Aunt Clare," said Miss Ross, who was brought up in the Roman faith, educated in a convent, and now counted among her friends a handsome young priest of Erin, who often gave her absolution.

"I confess I am so, but not without good reason, as you know. No priests or nuns for me. I know what I'll do, I will send for one who is despised by the priests as I despise them. Bring my portfolio and write me a note to that Dr. Bruce of the Free Chapel. I believe that he is a man of more merit than pretence. He has a wife and children whom he loves and honors, and all the Churchmen accuse him of being too partial to publicans and sinners. The other day the priests of all sects wanted to mob him because he prayed beside the grave of a poor wretch who died in a house like this. He will neither be afriad to come here, nor to undertake my commission."

Belle had brought the portfolio and was waiting at the bedside.

"What shall I say?"

The invalid dictated the following brief note, which Belle wrote in a graceful hand.

To Doctor Bruce,

The Free Chapel, Cincinnati :

Sir : You will pardon a poor outcast for taking the liberty to send for you. She does so because she sorely needs a friend. You will know who I am by the name at the bottom of this. It is, of course, not my real name. I am dying. Shall I see you at once ?

Clare Adamanti."

At the bottom Belle added the address, and the words "written by her friend Belle."

The excitement caused by the unusual activity of her mind had considerably exhausted Lady Clare. But her resolution conquered, and after a brief spell of coughing, she directed Belle to go at once on her errand and to send "Kitty" to her. Belle only said "Yes dear," and was gone, deeming explanations inexpedient.

It was now about the middle of the afternoon, and Belle knew it would require the rest of the day to make the circuit marked out for her. The carriage was waiting, so she only tarried long enough to tell Ida not to let Aunt Clare know about Kitty's absence.

Various projects had begun to form in Belle's mind even before she quitted her mistress' room. Was it really likely that Lady Clare would die soon ? She remembered a former promise of the courtesan's, to leave her a handsome competence. Would that promise ever be fulfilled, or was she now determined to leave all to her own child ?

"In this life," she mused, "trickery is my only weapon. If I have wit I must use it. The girl, no matter who she is, must take care of herself. It is certain she is Clare's child, for she is too shrewd to blunder there. A very good reason, then, why she must never see her again. A week. She said she could not live a week. Well, Mike and I can do much in a week. If the girl has disappeared, and nothing is heard of her, she will easily believe that she has gone back to her friends. She's got at least $150,000, and it should all be mine. But the first thing I must do is to see Mike."

She told the coachman to stop at her drug store.

"Yes," she said, continuing her cogitations, "Mike will know just what to do. He has often said that Lady Clare ought to do something handsome by me.

I think I'll destroy this now." Here she took the note directed to Dr. Bruce, from her pocket. "But perhaps I better let Mike see it," she went on after she had torn the envelope slightly, "for it may be best to send it after all." She put it back into her pocket, and told the coachman to drive faster.

The drug store at which the carriage presently stopped was not in the business portion of the city.

The only other place of business in the vicinity was a grocery, which was closed. The wind was blowing bleakly so that most people were in-doors. The next building but one on the south side of the drug store was a Romish church built of grey-stone, in a mixed and ornate style of architecture, at that time one of the most solid looking places of worship in the city.

The owner of the drug store, being a good Catholic, was allowed to use the alley which ran through from the rear of the church to the other street for bringing in goods, and had a door at the side of his building for that purpose. It was, moreover, used as an entrance to the parochial school and was convenient for women who did not wish their husbands to know they went to confession, and others who wanted to seek priestly society or counsel without exciting suspicion.

Belle passed through the drug store and out at the side door. As she approached the door of the parsonage she was met by a man who glanced at her and hurried on. Father O'Rouke was alone and unfeignedly glad to see her. He bestowed rather more than a fatherly kiss on her pouting lips, and clasped her in an embrace that suggested the lover rather than the anchorite. Father O'Rouke was, no doubt, a bad specimen of his kind, if it is to be accounted bad to do and be exactly the opposite of all that one pretends, all that he vows, and all that is commonly accepted as right. To the eye he was a typical priest, about thirty-five.

Belle was too much occupied with her business projects to waste much time with his endearments, and told him at once what had brought her.

"Let me see the note," said O'Rouke, "of course it can't go to the heretic: that won't do, but in case we want to send it—well, what's the matter?"

"I've lost the note!' cried the woman.

"Nonsense! look again."

She looked in vain, in her pocket, and her muff; and finally the florid Michael O'Rouke, priest and teacher, went out and searched along the alley and in the drug store, and asked Mr. Cresser, the clerk, to be good enough to look in the carriage and see if the lady had dropped it there, telling him it was a most important document.

When Belle alighted from the carriage the letter had dropped under her feet and had been blown against the curbstone on the other side of the street. It was picked up by the man she met in the alley, who, on reading the the address, decided to deliver the stray missive, as he had to pass the Free Chapel on his way home.

O'Rouke confessed that there was a bare possibility that, if she had dropped the note in the street, somebody might pick it up and take it to its destination. But he thought the chance very remote, and said that he would himself undertake to intercept the heretic even though he should receive it. Belle then set out for the military prison where quite a number of the "boys in grey" were already in durance vile. Her last words to the priest were.

"For goodness sake, Mike, don't let that man go to Castle Adamant, even if you have to throttle him."

"He'll not go there, darling. Lave that to me. Its my duty to protect the innocent, and I'll do it, darling, I'll do it ivery toime."

Moved by a righteous indignation, he was promptly on his way to Dr. Bruce's house, having arranged with Belle to call at the parsonage on her way home to compare notes.

The Free Chapel was only a few squares away, and the Doctor's home was situated in the lot adjoining. The priest's adamantine assurance wavered slightly as he approached the door of this cottage, where dwelt a man whom he regarded with the utmost repugnance. But he walked deliberately up the steps wondering if his visit was observed by any of his own flock, knocked gently, and in a moment the door was opened by a bright sunny-headed little boy of probably six years.

"Is Dr. Bruce at home, little man?" asked O'Rouke.

"Yes, sir," the child replied, and then, running to

the open door of an adjoining room, he said, "Its a gentleman to see you father"

Dr. Bruce was just going out. He had on his overcoat, and carried his hat and walking stick in his hand.

"You will pardon me, doctor," said O'Rouke blandly, I have called on very important private business."

"Will you walk in, I am at your service," replied Dr. Bruce, throwing open a door on the opposite side of the hall, and beckoning him to enter.

They were alone in a neat and warm little drawing room, and O'Rouke spoke to the point at once. The priest, being on his good behavior, had unconsciously dropped his brogue.

"My name is O'Rouke, I'm a Catholic priest. A parishoner of mine tells me that a note was sent to you to-day, merely to annoy you, by a woman of the town (in view, no doubt, of your late condescension in the case of one of her class), and the matter coming to my notice, I thought it no more than justice to you that I should warn you of the trick."

The doctor was puzzled. The priest's ready invention had every appearance of being genuine. He took a few seconds to reflect before he answered.

"Yes, I have received such a note, and was just going in answer to the summons."

"Then I'm heartily glad, Doctor, that I'm in time to save you from the imposition."

"I am grateful to you Mr. O'Rouke, so far, but I must not decide too suddenly; the woman says she's dying."

"All trash and make-believe. With a foul gang of wretches in a drunken orgie they mean to laugh you to scorn on the holy Sabbath day. But," he continued in a haughty voice, and rising to go, "I have performed what I considered a duty, though an unpleasant one. It is for you to do as you see fit. Forewarned is forearmed. Good day, sir."

"One moment, Mr. O'Rouke," said Dr. Bruce with gentle dignity. O'Rouke had missed his play. With a man like Dr. Bruce, common honesty might always win, whereas either bluff or finesse would be sure to fail, for he could readily fathom them. He guessed at once that the priest had some hidden motive in seek-

ing to prevent his going to the address mentioned in the note.

"It seems the note was lost in the road—did your informant say who was the bearer of it?"

"Now yer afther cross-questioning me, so I've done wid ye," said the priest impetuously and with full brogue. "Its plain you think there's something wrong about my story!"

"Not in the least, Mr. O'Rouke, I was merely guarding against what might possibly be inaccuracy on the part of your informant, for I should rather risk the assault you say is in store for me, than fail in my duty to a fellow creature."

Smelling defeat the priest moderated his petulance, and answered calmly:—"Well, then, the bearer was a servant in the house of Clara Adamanti who heard the contents of the note and the plot in connection with it, and came to me for my advice. She lost the note, but I suspected it might find its way to you and came here to warn you of the trap, thinking you would at least thank me for my trouble, and yourself be saved from an outrage."

"I thank you most heartily, Mr. O'Rouke, and shall certainly not expose myself to such a danger after your friendly notice."

As there was nothing more to be said O'Rouke withdrew, thoroughly appreciating the equivocal nature of the doctor's final words.

It was after nightfall when Belle again alighted at the parsonage. O'Rouke was ready to receive her. But she was so much troubled by the fact that the letter had been delivered that she considered all else as useless, and merely said that Lamont's account of the girl was exactly what Lady Clare had told her years ago, and that the girl was not and had not been at the lodgings in Vine street.

"I suspect," said O'Rouke, "that Bruce has gone to Lady Clare's. Your dropping that note has spoiled everything! If you had only had time to get a few dare-devils there to receive him! But its too late for that now; the mischief's done. Niver mind, Belle, darlin. "You can generally count on the plans of the heretical divils goin' awry. And take note that while there's

only one thing in your way, all else is in your favor. Be off now, child, be off, an' moind you, don't forget your bades!"

CHAPTER XIX.

Have I not had my brain seared, my heart riven,
Hopes sapped, name blighted, life's life lied away?
—*Byron.*

By the time Miss Ross arrived at Castle Adamant, Dr. Bruce had been there fully an hour.

"You are already aware," said Mme. Adamanti, plunging at last into those terrible confidences which she had summoned him to hear,—"that the name by which I am known is a fictitious one. I adopted it in the hope that it might help me to become as hard as a fiendish desire for vengeance made me wish to be. I find we cannot readily transform ourselves into definitions of words. Indeed, I have designed more hard deeds than I have performed, though often the performance lay easily within my reach. I was named "Hope," and a poor blighted hope I have proved myself indeed! What fatality there is in names....Our family name was Vincent. We had a small farm in Ohio southeast from Cleveland, and my father was deacon of the church in the village near by the farm. From my earliest recollection I was not happy or contented with my life there. As I grew older, the weary monotony of existence seemed to crush my spirit; I longed to see what the rest of the world was like, for I felt that if it were anything like the copy before me, it must be a sorry affair. The long sermons twice each Sunday, and at least two prayer meetings I was obliged to attend during the week, caused me to regard religion as the greatest curse on earth, and I early began to invent all sorts of excuses for staying away from them. My elder sister (we were the only children of our parents, and she was three years my senior) was perfectly satisfied with her lot, and the minister said she was the pattern for all the other young people to copy after. I began to dislike her and call her a hypocrite; and by pretending sickness, or purposely hurting myself, I would manage to stay at home, and while the others were away I would

read all the books and papers I could find. Sometimes I could only get hold of some old almanac, a catalogue of patent medicines, a treatise in pamphlet form on hog cholera, or the price list of a lightning-rod factory (how vividly I recall them all now!) but I would read every word of them several times over. I seemed to have an insatiable craving for knowledge, and by the time I was thirteen I was thoroughly miserable.

"That same summer I formed a resolution. A daughter of the village doctor, who had been my playfellow, came home from Cleveland, where she had just finished her first year in a girl's seminary, to pass the summer vacation. The account she gave me of her companions at school, the library of books, and the interesting studies seemed to set my brain on fire; and when she had gone I went to my father and asked him to let me go to the same school. But he said it would cost more than he could earn, and after scolding me for such foolishness, told me to go about my knitting. He was a rough, kind-hearted man, but never seemed to like me because of my waywardness. Unable to comprehend me he divined a latent force which unconsciously he feared. A few days afterwards I was talking to the doctor's daughter and asked her if they would let me come to the school if I would work for them. I would scrub, wash dishes, or do anything they wished, if they would only let me come there. I had got the notion from something she had said about poor girls working for their education, and she said she thought they would take me. The resolution I formed was to go to Cleveland without saying a word to those at home, as I knew they would prevent me. It was my duty to drive the cow to pasture in the morning, after she was milked, and I had to take her along the very road which I had always known as the "Cleveland Road."

"One morning instead of coming back from the pasture I kept straight on, and shunning everybody that came along, did not stop or turn aside until I reached the city at about four o'clock in the afternoon. I was amazed at the great crowded streets, as they seemed to me, and for some time I wandered about in a dreamy state, scarcely knowing where I was, or what I was

there for; I was not tired, for I had always been used to taking long walks; nor hungry, because I had eaten some pieces of bread and cheese I stored in my pocket before starting for the pasture. But as it began to get dark I felt afraid and bethought myself of the school which I must try at once to find. I had never been more than a few miles from home before, and had no idea how I was to find the school. As I remembered the name, however, I soon enquired my way, and the mistress gave me supper and lodging with some reluctance, telling me that she would send word to my father in the morning and I must go directly home. The next day but one my father came with his wagon and took me back. When he got me home he flogged me with a raw-hide whip, and from that day it seems that my doom was sealed.

I grew more miserable and dissatisfied as I grew older and my distasteful surroundings became more loathsome to me every day. I had some wild birds in cages and I let them all go because I thought they must feel as I did. I will not attempt to describe the anguish I suffered during the next three years. We seemed to get poorer all the time, and all I heard was long prayers morning and evening, and long blessings at each scanty meal, and fault-finding and grumbling the rest of the day. My father called me a "lazy burden," my mother said resignedly that her cross was a very heavy one and I was a sharp thorn in her side; and my sister told me religiously that there was no doubt I was possessed of a devil, and that I might at any time be turned into a cat or a pig if I did not give up my foolish ways and try and listen to the Gospel. I tried several times to tell both father and mother of the longing which enthralled my heart and brain, a longing which I could not then, in my ignorance and innocence, define, but which I know now was wholly and solely for knowledge, advancement. Even then I used to think, and enraged my sister by telling her, that less time spent at prayer-meetings and love feasts, as they called some of their inane gatherings, and more in gaining useful knowledge, and making useful effort, might improve our situation. But thinking this a reference to my father's shiftless-

ness, as I admit it was, she merely said that he was a good and religious man, and everything was secondary to that. I often thought when this remark recurred to me, that it was a pity I was not constituted to share their holy satisfaction and self-sufficiency, and that in the very midst of so much "saving grace" a phrase forever on their tongues, I was slowly but inevitably to be damned!"

"My father made such threats that I was afraid to run away again, and I eked out my existence in constant misery as if I had been an outcast without parents, friends, or wits. As I would not go to the religious meetings, I could have no clothes, and when I was sixteen I had but one shabby calico dress I could wear outside the house; no beggar could have been in a worse plight. Books were denied me, partly because of my stubbornness, and partly because my father was of opinion that they all contained something against religion. Even if by any stratagem I procured one to read, it was sent back to the owner with an insulting message, if the owner's name happened to be in it, or if not it was thrown into the fire. So that very soon the few friends I had were the best possible allies of my father, and I could not get a book on any pretext. The only newspaper I ever had a chance to see was a stupid weekly periodical called "Church Chimes," I think, the sentiments of which were exactly in keeping with the readers it found in our house. It was a mere pander to the most brutal ignorance and superstition, which, instead of seeking to deliver its readers from their moral and intellectual obscurity, invented the most cunning devices, as I now remember, to perpetuate their conceited stolidity. There may be such publications still in circulation in Christendom, but the only journal I have seen since then which is an exact counterpart in spirit, of that pestilential sheet, is the official organ of the Mormon Church at Salt Lake City—"

"You have been there, then?" asked Doctor Bruce, with surprise. "You have been to Utah?"

"Oh, yes; I have been there: I was among the first to go. But I shall come to that presently. Can you bear with me a little longer, Doctor? I want you to know all, that you may see I came not willingly to what I am;

that you may know a more awful phase of the "Greater Bondage," than you touched upon in your lecture. For if sin in its common shape is a bondage worse than slavery, and far worse than death, what shall be said of a system which forces this bondage upon its votaries as a religion, and grinds their hearts to powder in the attempt to reconcile them to its filthy and unnatural demand!" She spoke with such vehemence that the Doctor rose from his chair and entreated her to be more calm.

"I was speaking of the paper," she resumed, "but I have yet to tell you that it was the direct cause of my attempting to take my own life, a few days after my sixteenth birthday. In all my sufferings, such means of escape had never occurred to me until I read in our "religious" paper the most sentimental account of the suicide of a young girl who had drowned herself, as they said, in a fit of temporary insanity. But she was a church-going girl, and the account went on to say that her mind had been shattered by sickness, and closed with a conjecture that she might even have fallen into the river by accident. Both my mother and sister had told me so often that I was out of my mind, I sometimes thought it might be true; and now on reading this account the thought of destroying myself took a sudden hold on me and preyed upon my brain like a fever. I disputed with myself the advisability of the step for several days, but each day the determination grew stronger till at last the thought of vanishing entirely from the misery which I thought had shattered my mind, made me merry, and the chilly indifference of those about me became even more marked at the change in my demeanor. On the Sunday morning after my birthday (which was only remembered by the family circle with regret), I drove the cow to the pasture as usual, and came back to the house and put on my best clothes. As the others were starting for church I came into the room, I was so much amused at the solemn, church-going expression on their faces, that I laughed, and then asked them, with half comic audacity, to kiss me good-bye before they went. My father and mother had been quarreling for an hour, and were not in the best of humor, so that this unheard of demand from me caused the former to hastily cram

his testament into his coat pocket and go outside, and provoked the latter to raise her best parasol as if to strike me. As they went away, I heard my father say to mother, that if she had not always been a religious woman, he would feel inclined to doubt that "Hoe" (as they always called me) was any relation to him. To which she replied that I was a dreadful trial for them both—but that I was not quite so bad as the burden of their poor pastor who had a son twenty-five years old, a helpless idiot, not even able to eat his food, or help himself in any way. This was said as they were getting into the wagon, and as I turned away from the window where I had heard it all, I wept bitterly, and decided at once that they should never see me alive again. Soon after my father's wagon was out of sight, I went across the fields to another road leading into the village which crossed a deep and rapid stream about half a mile from our farm, and hurried along towards the bridge with the resolute intention of drowning myself. When I reached the stream I could see nobody coming from either direction, and felt my brain reeling as I staggered to the middle of the bridge and threw myself headlong from its side near the center of the current. I was almost unconscious when I fell, but as I struck the cold river, I felt a sharp pain in my right side. The cold shock restored my senses so that in an instant I fully realized my situation, and wondered why I was not dead —why I was still there close to the bridge suffering dreadfully, but only swung about by the seething current and not carried away to the doom I had sought. I instantly discovered that my clothes were caught on something below the surface of the water, and that I had scratched and bruised myself on the same obstacle when I fell. I uttered no cry though my head was kept above water by the snag or timber which held me. I only thought of breaking away, but I tried in vain. Of a sudden there was a dull roaring noise above me which startled me so that I screamed wildly two or three times, and struggled madly to break away. I heard voices. A wagon or carriage had stopped on the bridge, and a horseman rode to the middle, just above me and dismounted. A moment later I saw people looking down at me, and a young man climbing down the timbers towards me.

"I must have fainted, for I remember nothing that happened until the same night I awoke from my stupor and found myself in my own bed with mother and sister sitting beside me. They told me I had been saved by young Mr. Langley. I knew of him and his family merely as the very poor know of the very rich. It seems that one of their servants recognized me, and Mrs. Langley, having just returned from church in her carriage, sent me directly home without waiting to see whether I was alive or dead.

"Next morning the doctor, having heard of my rescue from the river, and knowing that my father would probably not call a doctor until too late, came in to inquire about me. He found me with a broken arm and rib, and in a consuming fever. As he was engaged in setting the bones, my father entered and told him in a surly manner that if he did anything for me he need n't send a bill, for he had scarcely enough to live on, and anyway would not spend a cent on a hussy that tried to take her own life. The doctor merely replied, 'I shall send you no bill, Mr. Vincent,' and went on with his work, saying what he could to soothe and encourage me. I lay ill for some time, and was a great burden to my mother and sister, but the doctor took good care of me, and the young man who rescued me from the river called every day, to inquire how I was.

When I was convalescent I was sitting one afternoon in a rocking chair under a large apple tree in front of the house. Young Langley rode up to the gate, and seeing me there, dismounted and came in. We were alone for some time, and he gave me to understand that he had taken a great fancy to me. Before he left he asked me to go for a drive with him next day, which I was refusing to do as I did not like his manner, when my mother came up and told him, 'yes, I should certainly go.' She and sister made me a new dress of some light material so that I looked neat, and was secretly proud of my sudden distinction though far from being comfortable in the enjoyment of it. That drive proved but the beginning of a series in which I was drawn deeper and deeper into the toils by his adroit flattery and dissimulation. He knew that I was at his mercy : my ignorance, commonly called innocence, fashioned me for

his purpose, and the blind and criminal neglect of my people left me to my fate. The tragedy of the foolish maiden fascinated and betrayed, was at length enacted when he had led me to think that we were to be married in a few days. He kept up the deception for a time, and then told me flatly that he had never intended to marry me. He tore a ring from my finger which he had placed there as a part of his trick, and left me, as he hoped, no doubt, forever.

"It was soon after reported that he had been converted to Mormonism by some missionaries who had been quietly working in the neighborhood, and that he had gone to their City of Nauvoo on the Mississippi. Who shall tell the forlorn agony of spirit which then beset me! I should have made another attempt to destroy myself, had I not been held back by the existence of my child, which I could no longer conceal.

"When my father became aware of my situation he drove me out of the house and warned me never to show myself there again. But this seemed to me only a just punishment, though of all that then concerned me I only fully realized that I had been betrayed. My poor mother begged him to have pity on me, and my sister added her entreaties, but he would not listen, and I wandered slowly away scarce knowing what I was about. The instinct of self-preservation seemed at last to arouse me, and I made my way to Cleveland where I found employment as a domestic servant. The woman with whom I lived was very kind to me in my desolation. She was bearing the cross of a faithless husband and entered into my sorrow. I told her my story, and after my child came she advised me to write to its father. He was then at Nauvoo, and in reply to my letter said I might come to him if I came alone. My employer helped me to devise a plan for the temporary abandonment of my baby, leading me to hope that I might recover it whenever I was ready. At last I adopted her plan as the only escape from my miseries short of suicide. What bitter anguish it caused me to leave my child! But I mustered up my resolution, and the tragedy of my life went on. Early one morning I left the little dainty creature near the house of a good old minister,—the same Dr. Taine who died recently at Cleveland from a

shock caused by the flight of his daughter with the rebel spy, Lamont."

"Yes, I remember."

"That was my daughter—the foundling, Hagar!"

For a time she could not speak.

"All these years," she continued, at length, "I had supposed her dead, and now she is here, under this roof, brought and delivered to me by my friend, her betrayer!"

Her form quivered with emotion, and for a time it seemed that she would not be able to continue. But by a desperate effort she controled her emotion, and went on.

"Hoping to secure kind treatment for the child, I left a note with her intimating that I had drowned myself in a pond near by; and after I had seen a workman pick up my baby and carry her to the house, I went back to the city and joined a party of Mormon emigrants who were starting that day for Nauvoo. I took my place in one of their wagons. They were all heavily laden with house-furniture, agricultural implements and provisions. By seven o'clock we were moving slowly out of the city to begin that gloomy pilgrimage. By what seemed to me a fatality, we traveled the same road I had already been that morning, and were soon passing the very house where I was leaving my soul. It was only by the most determined effort that I could restrain myself from leaping from the wagon and going to claim my deserted baby. The workmen, the minister, and some women and children were about the pond searching for the poor desperate wretch who had deceived them so shamefully, and when I thought of what I was doing my face burned with remorse till I almost relented. My companions thought I wept for the friends I was leaving behind, and paid very little attention to me,; and as we rumbled along the hard roads, the scene was constantly shifting, so that by an effort I at last became more cheerful.

"We were on the road almost a month, and on our arrival at Nauvoo, Langley gave me a very luke-warm reception, and instead of taking me to his own house, placed me in the prophet Smith's family where my position was that of a servant. The prophet himself under-

took my conversion to the new faith, and I was soon satisfied with the whole Mormon pretense, the golden-plates, the revelations, the miracles, and all else they taught me.

"I had learned with great facility, because the prophet had said that I could not become Brother Langley's wife for time and eternity under the 'new and everlasting covenant,' until I entered heartily into the religion that had saved him. I was willing to do anything to attain the end that brought me to the edge of the wilderness, and acquiesced in it all without half understanding what was meant. They appealed to my sympathies also with great effect, telling me of the dreadful persecutions they had suffered in Ohio and Missouri, and I only heard at Nauvoo what the gentiles did against the saints, and never a word about the aggression and misconduct of the latter. The prophet's wife and one or two of his concubines coached me sedulously for some secret and mysterious ceremony that I must pass through in the Temple to become the celestial wife of Brother Langley, as they said; and by that time I had imbibed so much of their prejudice against the world in general that I regarded them almost at their own estimation.

"I had been in Nauvoo a year when I was finally told I was to be married to Bishop Langley. In the interval I had received letters regularly from Mrs. Benjamin my employer in Cleveland until the last two months, during which I had three or four brief notes dictated by her and written by another hand. These informed me that Mrs. Benjamin was prostrated by a severe illness My letters were always brought to me opened by Langley, who took my replies to the post-office. I was never allowed money enough even to pay postage on a letter. The last one I ever received was apparently in the same hand as the others, and stated that the baby I had abandoned had died of croup, and that Mrs. Benjamin was not expected to live more than a few days. That letter was a forgery which Langley had procured to deceive me. The information he had received was to the effect that Mrs. Benjamin had died suddenly, and he believed that all clue to the child perished with her. In the crushing grief which seized

me at the news of my baby's death, Langley made some weak efforts to cheer me, and so desolate was my life that I tried to fancy, though painfully conscious of his lack of proper feeling, that his attentions were all that my heart craved. The 'celestial' ceremony was deferred for a short time in consequence of my sorrow, which they called 'sickness.' At length the fatal day arrived, and I was made a 'celestial' wife to Langley, given a name by which I was to be known to the saints in heaven, and overcome by the avalanche of mystery and mummery which the new priesthood had at its command; the borrowed rubbish of all systems supplemented by inventions of its own.

"I had not quite understood the covert reference I had heard made in the prophet's family as to the meaning of 'celestial' marriage, and was horrified on my arrival at Langley's house to be introduced to another woman as his wife, whom I was commanded to honor and obey as himself. The sophistries of that woman, who was related to the prophet and had been a pupil of his visionary and ignorant mother, gradually caused me to accept the situation, though my nature continually revolted against what I felt to be an ignominious and contemptible relation. In spite of the 'celestial' poems of one of the prophet's concubines; the most polygamous passages from Scripture; the prophet's undoubted inspiration from on high, and the quiet but insinuating canvass of the doctrine that was then being made, I could not help thinking myself wronged; could not silence the still, small voice that nature had established in my soul, and that cried out against this sanctified outrage.

"But a crisis was approaching, and in the midst of alarms more or less real, I gradually became so indifferent that I could not tell myself from the fanatics about me. In the winter of 1845, Langley was among the most influential of those who stood by Brigham Young, and favored the project of moving in a body to the far West, there to establish an empire of their own. Their prophet and his brother had been killed some time before, by a mob in Carthage Jail, where they were confined on charges the Mormons considered to be false, and the people were now obliged to fly before the

dangers that threatened, unless they were willing to live like other citizens according to the customary laws of order and decency."

Very thrilling was her narrative of the journey of the pioneer Mormon train, of which she was a member, in the spring and summer of 1847, from the Missouri River to the Great Salt Lake. The region had only been explored a short time before by General Fremont, and that entire country extending two thousand miles from East to West and over a thousand from North to South was a trackless wilderness. The memory of the fatigues and dangers of that dreadful pilgrimage came back like a nightmare to the poor invalid, and she hastened on to the later scenes.

"As the colony at Salt Lake grew in numbers, and agriculture was the only productive industry then possible, mere necessaries of life were produced in quantities far exceeding the needs of the community; and Edwin Langley was the first, having some good teams and wagons at his disposal, to turn a cargo of such commodities into gold, among the rich placers that had riveted the attention of the world on California. The first adventure of the kind having succeeded far beyond his hopes, he repeated it again and again with such results that he was recognized as the richest and most enterprising saint in Zion. He gave his support to all schemes set on foot by Brigham Young for the general welfare of the 'Saints,' and was soon only second to the new prophet himself, in his wealth of lands, flocks and herds, and wives and children.

"After several years of untold humiliation, during which I had struggled in vain against my unquenchable aversion to the system, I resolved if possible to escape to California. The fact that I bore no children was made a subject of ugly comment about me, both by my saintly lord and his more fortunate concubines, two of whom were vulgar factory hands from Coventry, who found the saintly life entirely satisfactory and laughed at me for my crazy notions. At length my opportunity arrived. A handsome young man with whom Langley had become acquainted in California, stopped at Salt Lake on his way to the States, and was invited by Langley to visit at his house, which was one of the few good

ones in the Mormon Capital. I often met him, and he sought me constantly, uttering words of sympathy, and finally obtaining not only a complete confession of my miserable lot, but an influence over me which was irresistible. We were aware of the danger of our secret conferences, and as the stranger had already overstayed his time, were conscious that something desperate must be done, and that parting from each other was not to be one of the alternatives. He was a cool and deliberate man. He successfully planned our flight, and we went together to New Orleans. arriving in the gay season of the Carnival.

"I had noticed on the steamboat that my husband, as I called him, sat up late every night to gamble, and that he inevitably won. My life became a kind of delirium, the dazzle and whirl of which increased immensely after our arrival at the Crescent City, where we were surrounded by sporting men and the beauties of the town who were old and familiar friends of my lover. I soon became intoxicated by the life of this gay society, so strangely in contrast with the rest of my experience, and went on and on in the maddening round of pleasure until it became as indispensable to me as to the rest.

"We had only been in New Orleans a few months when my lover was shot dead at a gambling table. I was again left to battle with life. All the world outside the constellation where Fate had cast me was closed against me forever, but I did not realize this fact until I had proved it by bitter experience. It then became clear to me that I must remain where I was and make the best or the worst of my lot. Possessed of a certain shrewdness and tact I sold the costly lace and diamonds my lover had given me, and with the proceeds, added to some timely loans from his friends, opened a sumptuous palace, which soon eclipsed in splendor and patronage everything of the kind that had been known in the Paris of the Southern States, I speculated on the Exchange, and in the slave market, was lucky, and found I was rapidly amassing a fortune. Finally, about four years ago I came to Cincinnati with several ambitious designs; but my chief object was health: I could not longer endure the climate of New Orleans.

"Now, Dr. Bruce, you have heard my story. My money

and my poor child are here—can you undertake my commission?" She spoke with strong emotion, and for the first time during the narration, wept bitterly.

"Yes, madam," said the Doctor "if I can serve you and the young girl of whom you speak, I will do so. What do you require from me?"

"To become executor and administrator of my estate, to which she is the only heir. I should prefer that you sell all real-estate and turn it into ready money. Nothing that I shall leave for her is the fruit of my vicious life; I made it all on the Stock Exchange by a series of lucky speculations. Whatever I realized otherwise I shall leave to those like myself who are now in possession, and as a fund to help young women who are in peril because of their poverty and ignorance."

An ominous tremor shook her frame and for some time she remained silent. Then she said feebly:

"Would it be possible, Doctor Bruce, to have the papers made out now——this evening? I feel that I must not delay."

"Yes, it could be done to-night but, perhaps, if you were patient until to-morrow——?"

"There will be no to-morrow for me, Doctor. I beg you do it now."

She raised herself quickly to a sitting posture and, glancing about with a wild apprehensive gaze, brushed the back of her hand across her eyes as if to wipe away a mist that suddenly came before her.

"Quick! Doctor, quick! Don't let me die till this is done!"

The Doctor was holding her hand and supporting her.

"Feel no alarm;—it shall be done at once. Lie down and be patient. I have a legal friend who lives near by. I can bring him in a moment, and everything shall be done as you wish."

His words calmed her, and she sank back upon the pillow with a faint smile and a pathetic look of gratitude.

As the Doctor passed through the hall he said to Miss Ross and Ida who came to him for news of the patient:

"Keep her very quiet until I return. One of you should stay by her and give the medicine as her doctor directed. It is a powerful stimulant and she will require it."

He had just gone out the front door when Mme. Adamanti's bell was heard and Miss Ross hastened to her.

A kindly smile lit up her grief-marked face when Belle approached and asked in a voice of genuine feeling how she was.

"I am better now, and will soon be well."

Her voice sounded strange, and made Belle feel uneasy. She continued:—

"I wanted to see you, Belle, to tell you that I am going to make my will. My promise to you, Ida, and the others is not forgotten. But the rest of my estate I shall leave to this girl, 'Kitty,' who is my own and only child. I want you to tell her, at once, that a gentleman has been here who has her fortune in trust, and that he is coming back presently to show her the papers. At a signal from me you will bring her here, and after I have embraced her she will go with Dr. Bruce,—ignorant of what or who I am."

Miss Ross kept her counsel about the girl's flight, hoping there still might be a turn to her own advantage. As Mme. Adamanti continued to talk about her child with a strange, embittered curiosity, Doctor Bruce came in with the lawyer, and Belle retired.

The will was soon prepared, but Mme. Adamanti experienced great difficulty in signing her name. When all was ready she summoned Miss Ross to bring 'Kitty.'

"She must know you as her benefactor, Dr. Bruce, without a hint that the bounty comes from me.—Well where is Kitty?" she demanded when Miss Ross entered alone.

Bell was half abashed, half defiant.

"I don't know."

"What do you mean?"

"Simply that the girl is not in the house. She has run away."

Again Lady Clare raised herself to a sitting posture and glared wildly about, ringing her hands.

"Gone? Gone! You have fooled me, then? Begone yourself and never let me see your face again. But you will find her, Dr. Bruce? Go now and look for her—go at once;—find her if you hope for mercy! Oh, devils! vipers! to betray the innocent. Find her or the curse of God shall pursue——"

She gasped and sank back. At that moment her doctor entered. Surprised by the unwonted scene he hurried to the bedside and involuntarily seized the wrist of his patient. A gesture from Doctor Bruce reassured him and the silence was only broken by the death-moan of the sufferer.

Suddenly the watchers were startled by a ring at the front door bell. Jerry knew that his mistress was dying and opened the door noiselessly.

"I have a warrant to search this house for one Hagar Taine, and to arrest the keeper, Clare Adamanti."

It was a Captain of the Military police who spoke, and a squad of armed men were with him.

"Hush!" said Jerry softly and bursting into tears. "She is dying."

"And the girl?"

"Has fled."

CHAPTER XX.

Hagar, after leaving Castle Adamant, wandered about the streets for a time entirely bewildered and oppressed by the wildest apprehensions. That quarter of the city was pervaded by the silence of Sunday. The air was cold, and the streets were comparatively deserted. She was alarmed by the fact that several men who passed her stopped and eyed her strangely, and hastened her pace with a vague idea of getting as far as possible from the ill-omened house where Ida had said all the inmates were "Hagars." The name now had in it some fearful meaning, and the thought that they might pursue and capture her thrilled her with terror. She rushed along, not daring to look back lest she should see them coming.

Her first impulse was to go to Mrs. Green's house, on Vine Street, to which Lamont had taken her when they arrived at Cincinnati. But suppose the people of the Castle should come there in search of her? No, the risk was too great. She must go there to get her effects but she would wait until to-morrow, and then, perhaps, she might take the train to Cleveland and seek forgiveness from Dr. Taine and the mistress of Chestnut Grove.

Lamont had kept her in ignorance of Dr. Taine's death. She had written to him several times—once after she come to Cincinnati; but it suited her betrayer's purpose not to send the letters, and he had destroyed them.

At length, dazed by her strange surroundings and well-nigh distracted by a sense of her desperate predicament, the words of the officer who arrested Lamont occured to her:—"You may hear something to your advantage at the City Hall."

By dint of persistently enquiring her way she finally found the City Hall. The place was silent and deserted, but she went slowly up the stone steps and was about to knock when the janitor opened the door.

In answer to her question he told her to call at ten o'clock next day, and she turned away more downcast

than ever. Aimlessly she continued her wanderings, ignorant and indifferent as to where she was or whither her steps might lead. Her mental state was fast approaching that phrase of melancholy which immediately precedes self-murder.

Towards evening she found herself in a quarter of the metropolis which, by its squalid and unwholesome aspect spoke of the pinching poverty and degradation of its inhabitants, and told by signs of awful significance, that even the most civilized part of the community was but one step removed from barbarism. Hagar instinctively felt that here she would be safe, as the denizens of the villa district would never think to seek her among the wretched and obscure. Her meditations now began to take a practical turn: Here she would find only people who worked hard for their daily bread. Her purse was almost empty. By her own act she had lost the friends who had loved her, and with whom she might always have had a home. What was to prevent her from earning a living by the work of her hands? Now and then, as she went along she heard the voice of some humble housewife singing merrily, and a bevy of factory girls who passed her were a picture of mirth and contentment.

Yes, she would exchange the clothes she had for some like those they wore, and, finding a lodging in their midst would hide herself and her sorrow in one of the neighboring factories.

A little further on she saw a group of women talking and laughing at the gate of a large manufactory. She accosted them on the pretense of inquiring her way, and when she said something about looking for work, some of them giggled, eyed her from head to foot, and made a sneering remark about "hunting work on Sunday." One of the forewomen seeing her embarrassment and the tearful evidence of her distress, stepped forward, rebuked the girls, and said kindly:—

"You have met with misfortune? Come in, and I will help you if I can."

Hagar was led into a neat little room which served as the forewoman's parlor and bedroom. The latter introduced herself as "Miss Dayton" and explained that most of the regular hands were boarded and lodged at the factory by their employers.

"Davis and Jones," said Miss Dayton, "are contractors for army clothing and are very kind to the employes who are earning a fortune for them: If you know how to run a sewing machine, or could learn quickly, you can make good wages here, and I can get lodgings for you with my married sister, Mrs. Johnson, who lives near by."

She asked no impertinent questions, and Hagar gave the brief explanation that she had lately lost her husband, and should be in absolute want unless she heard from her people. She said her name was "Mrs. Smiles," but Miss Dayton who was a little hard of hearing, thought she said "Miles." Hagar offered no correction, and was so introduced to Mrs. Johnson, whose lodger she became.

Her first night's experience in the realm of squalor was far from encouraging. Mrs. Johnson, in the kindness of her heart, got out her whitest sheets and pillow-slips and did her best to make the stranger comfortable. But just as Hagar was falling into a doze at midnight, Mr. Johnson came home from his regular Sunday pleasures, and made the rest of the night hideous by boisterous songs and a quarrel with his wife. The partitions of the old frame house were thin, and when the inebriate's wife begged him to be quiet on account of a young lady lodger in the spare room, Hagar heard him say:

"Well, well, got a lodger, eh? And a lady lodger at that? Well, I'll just go up and see what she's like"....

Mrs. Johnson prevented him only with great difficulty, and poor Hagar lay trembling with terror until near daybreak, when the drunken wretch became quiet. Then she fell asleep from sheer exhaustion and was not awakened until ten o'clock when Mrs. Johnson came to her with some tea and toast and many tearful apologies.

Hagar went to the City Hall directly after breakfast. She did not see Mr. Johnson. His wife assured her, however, that he would not be intoxicated again before Sunday.

The Mayor was not in, but his clerk handed her a letter that had come in his honor's care. She recognized the hand-writing as Josephine's, and took a cab that she might read it on her way to Vine Street. From it she received the news of Doctor Taine's death. She gave way to an ecstacy of grief, but was spared the knowl-

edge that his death was directly due to her conduct. Josephine referred to it as if supposing that Hagar already knew the details, and in the same connection informed her that Mrs. Taine had gone to Boston for her health leaving Chestnut Grove in charge of the servants, and had given out that she would spend the summer abroad. Josephine expressed the warmest friendship and keenest sympathy for Hagar, and, in conclusion said: "I am coming to Cincinnati as soon as I can make my preparations, to help with nursing the sick and wounded soldiers in the hospital there. If you will communicate with me, my dear Hagar, and let me know where to find you, we might live and work together and comfort each other in these awful times. When this strife is ended we may be alone indeed. The last accounts I saw of our friends at the front were sad enough: My dear husband had been wounded in the arm, James Taine was hurt by the fall of a horse that was shot under him, and poor Mark Kilbourne, a noble and gallant fellow, was among the dead. He fell at Philip's side while doing his duty like the brave man he was." Urging her to write soon and not to be cast down by the cruel wrong that had been done her, the letter closed with the hope that the friends might soon meet in Cincinnati.

"Yes," she said, communing with herself, "Josephine is sincere; I can trust her. And yet, since I have brought this sorrow upon myself why should I look to my former friends for comfort? Why do I not rely on myself now as I did when I took the fatal step that hurled me into this abyss of wretchedness? No, no; I will not let them see me; I will not tell them where I am or what I am, but hide myself with the anguish I have purchased by my folly."

She was in the midst of this dreary train of thought when the carriage stopped, and the driver opened the door.

"This is the house, mum; see that brass plate beside the door: Mrs. Green, Board and Lodging."

Hagar recognized the entrance, but if she had felt any doubt it would have been removed by the apparition of the Irish chamber-maid who was outside sweeping the steps.

She alighted, paid the fare, and then accosted Biddy.

"Your mistress has heard what happened and prevented our return, has she not?"

"Yis, honey," replied Biddy, looking with a mild stare into the young girl's face. "But shure," she continued in a whisper, detaining Hagar at the door, "the divils afther us all! what's comin' now, I declare!"

Thinking that she referred to the arrest of Mr. Smiles, Hagar merely said in an evasive tone; "Nothing must astonish us, Biddy. The enemy may be right here in this city soon, for aught we know."

"Indade, honey, she's here already, she's come wid 'er childer, honey dear, an' she's not an hour in the house."

But Hagar went in quickly without waiting to hear Biddy's remark. Meeting nobody in the hall, she hurried up stairs, and, on entering the apartment that had been her own, found herself confronted by a bright, golden haired little girl who ran away calling:

"Ma'ma, ma'ma, here's a lady."

Hagar was stunned and confused. Could this be the rich and handsome wife of Lamont, and her children, of whom Ida had spoken? She had but a moment for conjecture, for quickly answering the child's alarm, Mrs. Lamont came in from the adjoining room.

"I did not hear you knock," she said, eyeing Hagar suspiciously.

"No," the latter replied, with a marked tremor in her voice, "this was my apartment, and I was not aware it had been let to another. I beg your pardon—" Hagar had become deadly pale and was now greatly abashed and agitated in the presence of the woman she felt to be her enemy. She was unable to speak another word, and was retreating slowly towards the door.

"Are you the woman, then, who came here with Charles Lamont,—with my husband?" demanded Mrs. Lamont fiercely—"Speak, I say! are you the she-devil who has robbed me of my husband?"

A little boy, younger than the girl, had come from the bed-room with his mother, and both began to cry piteously. Dismayed by this strange and unexpected encounter, Hagar could scarcely find voice to speak, but her alarm at the menacing aspect of her antagonist enabled her to say faintly:

"No—you are mistaken, madam; I came with my husband, and that was not his name."

A negro woman, Mrs. Lamont's servant, came in.

"Take the children into the bed-room, Dinah, and shut the door," said her mistress.

Dinah glanced at the visitor, and obeyed. Hagar would have made her escape, but the sense of danger which had at first transfixed her, was now giving place to a different feeling:—she was prepared, if need be, to set her betrayer's wife at defiance.

"Do not think to deceive me, wretch, cried the Southern lady, fiercely; if it were not for my children, I'd kill you."

She rushed towards Hagar furiously as if to strike her, but the latter stood her ground without moving a muscle, and gazed at her scornfully.

"That would be a smaller wrong," said Hagar calmly, "than your husband has done me. Do not blame me, madam, nor seek to avenge yourself by hurting me; but go for satisfaction to the villain who has cruelly injured you, and ruined me!"

"Begone, woman, or I shall do you harm!" shrieked Mrs. Lamont, "Begone, begone, I say! I'll kill you!"

Dinah having heard the excited voice of her mistress, came into the room again just in time to prevent a tragedy. She seized Mrs. Lamont and held her, saying quickly to Hagar:

"For de Lord's sake, go, young lady, go afore its too late!"

Hagar turned abstractedly, and left the room. Mrs. Lamont sank into a chair sobbing hysterically.

It had been a terrible morning for Hagar, and she felt grateful as she waited in Mrs. Green's parlor down stairs, that she had escaped unhurt. She had a few minutes to compose herself before the landlady came in, and spent them thinking of the sad case of Mrs. Lamont. For the moment, the wrong done herself by the same man who had deceived and outraged his wife and children, seemed as nothing by comparison. What was her life now, or that of her pretty children, but a miserable existence of doubt and apprehension? The innocent babes already began to partake of their mother's despair.

When the landlady appeared Hagar rallied her energies and asked for the small portmanteau and hand-bag she had brought from Chestnut Grove. They contained only articles that were her own before she left home. She did not ask for a large trunk of wearing apparel that Lamont had bought for her with Mrs. Taine's money, in Canada. Mrs. Green was not over-civil, but said she would try to obtain the articles named by the next day, when Hagar might send for them if she liked.

"There's a letter here for you that was left with Biddy the night you went away," said Mrs. Green, fishing the letter out of a tall vase of common china on the mantle-piece.

Hagar saw at once that it was in Lamont's handwriting, and her heart leaped, she scarcely knew whether with hope or dread. She quickly tore it open, and with a sudden "excuse me" to the landlady, read the missive.

"Dearest Kitty," it ran, "the game's up, and you are entirely free, so far as I am concerned, to follow the bent of your own genius. You are doubtless aware that your marriage with me at Hamilton was simply a farce? I needed diversion while laboring in Ohio, and you must confess that it was hardly my fault that you left your home clandestinely at three o'clock on a bitter winter's morning. You remember, I warned you. Girls are sweet but foolish little things! Or, is it rather their wisdom that makes them seek such adventures? The presentation this evening to Lady Clare Adamanti, will give you the entree to the world of fashion. As dear Mrs. Taine said in one of her last letters to me, you were certainly very lucky to have fallen into such good hands,. Au revoir, Sweet Kitty! I must be off at once to the Sunny South, where my wife and children are awaiting me.

Your devoted,

BENJ. T.

So intense was her anguish that it was only by a determined effort that she stifled the cry of agony that rose to her lips.

"Bad news?" Asked Mrs. Green, with a malicious twinkle in her eyes.

"Yes," replied Hagar, "very bad. My father is dead!" With this she gave way to the paroxysm she could no longer suppress, and tearing the letter in pieces cast it from her.

After she had gone, Mrs. Green gathered up the pieces and put them together for the diversion of her lodgers, and among the first to whom it was shown, was Mrs. Lamont.

Late that night a negro was admitted to Mrs. Green's house, who was met in the hall by Dinah, and shown to Mrs. Lamont's apartment.

She had been awaiting his arrival for some time, and sat, as pale as a statue, before the dying embers on the hearth.

The man who was tall and well dressed, approached her with marked deference.

"Well, Colt?" said she, interrogatively, her voice sounding faint and husky.

"I saw the Colonel, Madam, and he sent this letter, which, he requested that you would please read before asking me any questions."

She took the note, opened and read it, and threw it upon the embers, where it slowly smouldered until it was reduced to carbon flakes.

"They are not going to hang him, then," she said, sighing heavily, and leaning forward with her face between her hands.

"No, madam; he has been exchanged in accordance with the terms of the new convention just signed by the Governments of Richmond and Washington, and will start for Memphis in the morning by steamer. The exchange will actually take place at Vicksburg, so that he will be in the hands of the Union authorities for some little time yet."

"Very well, Colt; that will do. But stay; did you ask Colonel Lamont if he thought our troops were likely to capture this city?"

"I did, madam, and he said it was not at all unlikely. The tables are to be turned on the North by a concerted invasion by all the confederate armies, and Cincinnati will probably be one of the first cities taken."

"Then we may as well remain here. I shall never return to New Orleans while that cochon Butler is there,

unless it be to see him hanged, the robber! You may go now, Colt; I will decide on something in a few days.'

The negro withdrew, and Dinah was shortly after dismissed for the night.

Mrs. Lamont sat musing for a while. "Yes, it is true that the reports I have seen were in Northern papers, as he says:—and they may have falsified the facts, or this woman may have been a Yankee emissary especially deputed to ruin him in my opinion and in that of the South. He loves me and is the soul of honor; I know it! But what of all these appearances? What of this woman's coming here to-day, the elopement from Cleveland, the sudden death of the old father? It may have been another man!—yes another man commits the crime and he is charged with it to shield the Yankee! But his arrest in company with the woman in a house like that! Conclusive, if true, but easily to be conceived as a telling chapter in the invention. But worst of all the sore misgiving in my heart!"

"Oh, God," she cried, falling on her knees, and clasping her hands wildly, "help me to endure these torturing suspicions, or in Thy mercy, show me they are baseless!" She wept aloud for several minutes, but was startled by the approach of a small figure in a white night gown which clasped its arms around her neck and said:

"Oh Ma'ma, dear, please don't cry any more! Come to bed; papa will soon come. It frightens Charlie and me to hear you cry so. Come Ma'ma, come."

CHAPTER XXI.

Spencer had given up all hope of seeing Hagar again since his plans for her rescue were knocked in the head by the sudden death of Madame Adamanti and the breaking up of her house. The fact that Dr. Bruce became Hope Vincent's executor had been made public through the press, but every other detail was rigidly concealed by the doctor, to shield the young girl he was endeavoring to save and benefit. Spencer had therefore very naturally concluded that Hagar had either gone back to her home at Cleveland, or followed the fortunes of the denizens of Castle Adamant. In either case she had passed out of his life, as he supposed, and only recurred to him now as a sad memory.

What was his astonishment one Sunday, after a meeting at the factory, on going with Miss Dayton to call on her sister, to meet Hagar face to face on the threshold of Mrs. Johnson's house! She was going out for a walk, and would doubtless have passed on without noticing him had he not raised his hat, and exclaimed in a tone of wonder.

"Miss Taine!"

Hagar bowed her head and hesitated, uncertain what to do or say.

"Mrs. Miles, Mr. Spencer," said Miss Dayton, promptly introducing them. She had not understood his exclamation, and he accepted the introduction with as good grace as he could, to save Hagar from embarrassment. The latter continued on her way after a few words with Miss Dayton, and, as soon as she was in the street, Spencer said hastily to his companion:—

"I have met that young lady before, Miss Dayton, and must speak with her now before I lose sight of her."

"She lives here with my sister. She's a hand at the factory, and you can see her whenever you like," interrupted Miss Dayton. She was about to tell him there was a mystery in connection with the stranger, but Spencer, saying he had something of great impor-

tance to communicate, begged her to excuse him for a moment, and rushed out to overtake Hagar. The impulse was irresistible, for he felt that if he lost track of her then, she would somehow vanish from his sight forever.

"I humbly beg your pardon, Miss Taine," he said as he approached her, "I must venture to speak to you even though you refuse to answer."

Hagar stopped and turning her pale and grief-marked face towards him, said sadly:

"Why have you hunted me out, Mr. Spencer? Can I not be left alone with my sorrow?"

"Won't you shake hands, and let me talk to you like a friend; am I such a stranger?"

"You would remind me that you saved my life. Yes! but I had been happier dead," she said, with a bitter smile and a quiver of her lips. "But there's my hand, Mr. Spencer: it was not pride but shame that prevented me from extending it before." Tears came as she said this, and even the Elder was obliged to bring his handkerchief into requisition to prevent the beady drops that started from his eyes, from trickling down over his manly beard. They walked on together.

"I thought you had returned home," said Spencer, after a pause and with a touch of emotion he was struggling to conceal.

"I have no home," replied Hagar. "But, no matter," she continued in a tone of assumed courage, "I can work on here and earn my living. All I ask is to be let alone by the people I have met in this city. You were there, at the house they called the Castle. Were those people maniacs?"

"Yes, I fear they were;" said Spencer, noting that she mentioned them with alarm—"but you need not dread them now. Madame Adamanti is dead, and I think the others must have left Cincinnati, for I have not seen one of them since."

"Oh! I do not fear them," she replied. After some hesitation she continued: "You seem to be acquainted with Miss Dayton, and I hear that she has become a convert to your religion?"

"Yes, Miss Taine; she is the niece of one of our Bishops, and the Lord has mercifully brought her to the knowledge of the truth," he replied, reverently.

"I must ask a favor of you, Mr. Spencer."

"I should be happy to serve you," he replied.

"It is only that you will call me when speaking either of or to me, Mrs. 'Miles,' and not Miss 'Taine;' you forget that I am a married woman," said Hagar, with evident embarrassment.

"Mrs. Miles?" he asked, as if speaking to himself.

"I do not wonder that you are surprised—but I came by this name by accident, and adopted it the better to conceal myself—"

"By accident?" said the Elder, still perplexed.

"Yes. I gave my name as 'Mrs. Smiles,' but Miss Dayton thought I said Miles—I don't know if I did wrong in letting it pass; but I do not wish to create curiosity and suspicion by correcting it now, and must ask you to help me. Heaven only knows what I shall do!" She had spoken quite naturally until her final exclamation, which was uttered with poignant apprehension and concern. Spencer was about to venture some words of encouragement, when she suddenly stopped and said with coldness that sent a chill through him:

"Please leave me, Mr. Spencer—I want to be alone."

"As you wish," he said, raising his hat. "But will you not let me be a friend? May I not have the privilege of seeing you sometimes?" he paused, but, as she made no reply, went on. "Your request concerning your name, I shall comply with faithfully. I do not think you did wrong in permitting the misunderstanding, for the right name being only a fictitious one could never be of any use to you—"

"You ask me to let you be my friend—but you know you cannot be a friend to anybody who is not one with you in religious belief. So you told my brother James," said Hagar, as if she had been reflecting on this point and had not noticed what he was saying.

"I submit that you misquote me, but whatever I said then has nothing to do with my proffer to you."

"Then leave me," she replied, with her former coldness, "and if you are in earnest, let me have a few words with you at Mrs. Johnson's this evening." With a slight inclination of her head she walked on. The elder turned back.

It was a fine bracing afternoon, and the street Hagar had taken led to a suburban quarter where the sweet breath of returning spring fanned her cheeks, and the silence seemed propitious to her musings. But few persons passed her during her walk. The pretty cottages on either side of the street, surrounded by trees and shrubs that were beginning to put forth their leaves, and garden plots in which the gardener had begun his work, looked so homelike that she sighed involuntarily when she contrasted the lot of their happy inmates with her own. Presently she was startled from her reverie by the measured beat of muffled drums, and on reaching the next corner, saw it was a funeral cortege on its way to the cemetery. It was evidently a soldier who was going to his last rest, for officers in uniform occupied the carriages, troops were marching with reversed muskets beside the hearse, a squadron of cavalry closed up behind it as a funeral guard, and a military band was in attendance. It was one of Ohio's gallant sons who had fallen in a recent battle. Hagar thought of James Taine, of Will Sanders, of Mark Kilbourne .... Obliged to wait for the cortege to pass before she could proceed, she turned towards her lodgings and walked gloomily along, the only wish in her heart being that she might also die. She would do nothing wilfully to bring her to that solemn goal, but if God would somehow relieve her of the burden of what seemed her most hopeless life, she would think it the kindest blessing He could give.

On her return home she found the Elder awaiting her. They conversed for some time in Mrs. Johnson's parlor, and Spencer felt a re-awakening of his old interest, while Hagar seemed not averse to his confidence in her misfortune. He told her the published facts about Lamont, and she gave him an outline of her experience. Though much cast down in spirits, she had never looked so beautiful. With her head bowed in abject humility, and wringing her dainty hands in cruel self-torture, she said at the close of her story :

"And thus I sank deeper and deeper into the abyss he had made for me, and into which I plunged the night I madly left my home!"

All was now plain to the Elder, and as Hagar wept, he sat pitying her, and wondering what he could say

that would be most likely to win her to his faith; for it was evident, he thought, that she had been contemplating his Zion as a possible retreat, and it only remained for him to paint the scene in attractive colors, and he might have the pleasure of guiding her thither himself.

Other fancies accompanied these in the young missionary's mind. He felt a genuine compassion towards the unfortunate creature, but perhaps that was not a sufficient motive for all the trouble he subsequently took to serve her. When in reply to his queries she gave him to understand that she would not under any circumstance make her whereabouts known to her former friends, or to the members of Doctor Taine's congregation, he told her frankly that he could assure her a kind reception among "the saints" and invited her to prayerfully reconsider the opinion she had expressed of them on a former occason.

"There is no reason," said Spencer, in his most gracious tone, "why your misfortune should be known, for many young widows have been converted to the gospel; but if it were, our people would receive you with the deepest sympathy as a victim of the systems we oppose and denounce."

When the interview had reached a very interesting stage, and the Elder was satisfied he had sown seed that would be likely to yield a fair return, he was reminded by the striking of the clock that it was nearly time for him to repair to the hall at the factory for his evening meeting. After tea Hagar consented to attend with Miss Dayton, and was for the first time introduced to other converts who were going in the Elder's company to Utah.

Dazzled by the sublime picture the Elder had drawn of the Mormon Zion, most of his converts were eager to set out for that new "Land of Promise." It was arranged that the faithful should go by rail to Council Bluffs in time to join the regular autumn Emigrant train of the church. From that point they would require from two to three months, with the creeping ox-teams, to make the journey of more than a thousand miles across plains, mountains and deserts that lay between the Missouri River and the Mormon Capital.

Up to the moment when Miss Dayton, and several

other persons with whom Hagar had become acquainted at the factory, were starting for Council Bluffs with Spencer and his lieutenants, Hagar labored on at the factory without deciding to join the Mormons. In spite of the friendly sentiments and enthusiasm of those about her, and a restless desire to seek some distant refuge, she could not overcome her earlier impressions, caused by the frightful details of the Mountain Meadow Massacre, and other crimes she had heard imputed to the Mormons. But an event occurred at this time which quickly determined her to at least quit Cincinnati with them.

One day news was brought that the Union armies in Kentucky had been overthrown by the Rebels, and that the Rebel General Heth, was marching on Covington with an enormous force of hungry and victorious troops. Covington, the report said, would surely fall into the hands of the Rebels next day, and Cincinnati would then be given the alternative of unconditional surrender or immediate bombardment. The entire city was thrown into a panic by this startling report, and at every hour fresh details were circulated which made the alarm still greater. The Governor of Ohio had sent for General Lew Wallace, a gallant officer, who had been displaced in the field by a blunder on the part of his superiors, to organize the Militia of Ohio to assist in repelling the threatened invasion. With 40,000 raw recruits he had thrown up fortifications around Covington, which were sufficient, added to the rapid approach of Buell's army, to convince the audacious Heth that the game could not be bagged so easily as he anticipated. But the "Peace Democrats" declared that the resistance of the militia would be useless; and Spencer, in speaking of the prospects among his Mormon friends, ridiculed the idea of their confronting the Rebel army, and predicted that the city merchants, dry-goods clerks, and laborers who composed Wallace's force would run away like a flock of sheep before a band of wolves, the moment they saw the grim veterans of Shiloh and Donelson coming down upon them like an avalanche of fire.

Hagar, though more indifferent to the approaching danger than any of the others, was not proof against

the alarm which was visible in every direction. Armed men were hurrying through the streets; in the squares squads of volunteers of as motley appearance as old squads of volunteers, of as motley appearance as old mouthed Sergeants, some of whom assumed the swagger they thought indicative of military prowess, while ignorant as cattle of all but the merest rudiments. Several regiments in new uniforms with their bright accoutrements flashing in the sunlight, their star-decked banners floating gayly, and their bands playing the merriest tunes, arrived by rail and marched past the window of Hagar's lodging. All day long she could hear the sound of martial music, the loud huzzas of young recruits, the roar of distant cannon, and the nearer rattle of musketry at the drill-grounds, until she thought that the vague cant of Spencer to the effect that "The prophets were now to be fulfilled," really had a tangible significance. In this state of mind Miss Dayton found her a few days before the company were to set out for the Missouri, and it required but little persuasion to determine Hagar to cast her lot with them. Before it became generally known that Heth had been obliged to beat a hasty retreat, and that Cincinnati was safe, for the present, from sack and pillage, the little band of "Saints" were on their way, Hagar appearing like the only penitent among them. The others were gay and boisterous as if engaged in a picnic; she was sad and quiet as if going to her doom.

It was a strange, if not an imposing sight, that greeted them on their arrival at the Mormon rendezvous: A picture of human experience which has, apparently, passed away to be seen no more forever. Assembled on the plain near the outskirts of a small rambling village was a motley crowd of between 500 and 600 men, women and children, with their meagre effects, and with the wagons, oxen, horses and mules which their co-religionists had sent a thousand miles for them, all ready to plunge into the wilderness.

By the arrival of Elder Spencer's party the last cause of delay was removed and the order was issued for a start at break of day on the morrow.

The emigrants were a polyglot and heterogeneous as-

semblage, consisting of a few Swiss, and a good many English, Welsh, and Scandinavian peasants, besides a sprinkling of American and partially Americanized converts, similar to those brought on by Elder Spencer.

The English "saints" spoke a diversity of dialects almost as irreconcilable as the language of the Swiss and the Welshmen, and Hagar could not believe at first that they all hailed from "Merry England." The sexes were about equally divided, and she did not hear a word among them about polygamy. They were all anxious to be en route towards the Zion they had came so far to find, but a healthy state of discipline was maintained by the Elders in charge, and their movements were characterized by almost military order.

Spencer showed Hagar and Miss Dayton over the encampment and explained that the company was called a traveling "Stake of Zion" and divided into sections of ten, each of which was under the immediate charge of some reliable "Brother;" that ten of these sections composed another subdivision, subject to the direction of the Elder placed in command, and that the whole was under the guidance of the Captain or President. Thus every man, woman and child in the train had his allotted place and duty, both in camp and on the march. Hagar felt despondent, but was carried on by the novelty of the scene, the mirth and rural jollity of the people, and the busy preparations for the start. She realized fully that she now had either to share the journey of the emigrants, or go penniless and alone to one of the neighboring towns: and when they told her she had been placed with Miss Dayton in Elder Spencer's hundred, she silently acquiesced. Those to whom she had been introduced addressed her as "Sister Miles," and one old saint who had occupied the honorable post of "assistant working gardener" on the estate of an Earl not far from Coventry, expressed the opinion of several who had met her in the camp, when he said that 'she looked like a bird of Paradise among a lot of barn-yard fowl.' There was an appearance of refinement and gentility about her in spite of her poor attire and the ravages made on her beauty by months of grief and anxiety. Many of the coarse but good-hearted emigrants had noticed her, and as she was made a subject

of gossip among them, a statement, winked at by Elder Spencer, soon gained currency to the effect that she was the widow of a young officer who had been killed in one of the combats near Corinth in May. This was sufficiently vague, but answered every purpose, as it set at rest the tongues of mischief-makers who were already inventing scandal to account for the fact that she was soon to become a mother. It nipped their curiosity in the bud and Hagar was secretly grateful for the deception when told of it by Miss Dayton, though she dreaded the mystery which she felt to be enveloping her.

CHAPTER XXII.

We are the true born sons of Zion,
Who with us that can compare?
We are the royal branch of Joseph
The bright and the glorious morning star;
Oh! We are the true born sons of Zion!
—*Mormon Song.*

Then followed a long and dreary pilgrimage such as the people of no other age or country have seen the like of. Travellers of to-day who fly along in palace cars can form no conception of that dreadful journey. For days at a time not a drop of water could be had that was fit to drink; fuel was equally scarce, and the hard rations of squalid poverty offered but slender comfort to one of Hagar's mould, whose physical and mental condition was on the verge of utter prostration.

To add to the horrors of hunger, thirst, burning heat and blinding dust, the train was attacked by Indians near the crossing of the North Platte, and was only saved by a stratagem of Spencer.

The Indians were posted in an old stockade which had formally been a stage station, and were trying to burn the Mormon encampment during a stormy night. They had already stampeded a large part of the stock, and the train was in great jeopardy owing to the craven cowardice of the emigrants, and the short-sightedness of the commander.

Unknown to all except Hagar, whom he took care to inform in case he should be killed, Spencer extemporized a bombshell by loading a large iron bake-kettle with powder, shot and scraps of iron. He fixed a short fuse to it, and wrapped it round and round with strong wire. Then, at the risk of his life, he approached the stockade in the darkness, and threw his infernal machine into the midst of the Indians. An explosion immediately followed which drove from the stockade all whom it did not kill or maim.

The Mormons thought it a thunderbolt from Heaven. Their courage was revived, and next morning their

hearts were cheered by the sight of a troop of U. S. Cavalry approaching from the Westward.

The loss of the stock which the redskins took away with them was a sad blow to the train, and caused the company much delay and privation. But they struggled on, sustained by their faith and by the hope of a better time which awaited them in Zion. Many and loud were the murmurs at times, and often among those who made the strongest pretensions of religion, but no complaint escaped Hagar's lips, though she was approaching a crisis which she might well dread.

The train finally reached Bitter Creek, one of the dreariest sections of the route, towards the middle of October, and though still far from Zion, the chilly nights and frequent storms spoke gloomily of approaching winter. Hagar had been ill for some time with Mountain fever, and had become so enfeebled that much anxiety was felt for her.

One day as the wagons were jolting and grating over the rocky-road of a steep and narrow canon they were descending, word was brought to Dr. Richardson (a young returning missionary who was a mere tyro in medicine) that Sister Miles had suddenly become worse and required immediate attention. Her wagon, however, was half a mile ahead of the doctor, and when he arrived he found some of the women attending her, and that she had been prematurely delivered of a male child.

There had been deaths and marriages, but this was the first and only birth that had occurred during the journey, and it created a momentary sensation, which was only prevented from developing into a demonstration of a somewhat coarse character, by the critical state of the young mother's health. A halt of but one day could be allowed the poor sufferer for repose, so precious was every moment if they would pass the mountains before the roads were blocked with snow.

The little stranger was not destined to become either a joy or sorrow to its desolate and broken-hearted mother. It was very frail from the first, and after a few days, had passed away. Hagar named him Ishmael when they took his tiny body from her and buried it there in the sands of the desert, and among the mourners who bore it to its final resting place, the saddest was

Spencer, who believed the scene was but the precursor of one more solemn still, when they should be called on to bear its mother to a grave as lonely.

But, thanks to a strong constitution, she soon afterwards began to mend and was much improved in health before her arrival at Salt Lake. Some wagons from the Mormon settlements laden with fresh vegetables and other provisions, met the train at Green River, adding greatly to the comfort and happiness of the company for the remainder of the journey. They were, however, delayed by snow and bad roads and only emerged from the wintry gorges of Emigration Canon, on November 10th, and caught a glimpse of the beautious Valley of the Lake, with the silvery Jordon winding through it from South to North, and the "City of the Saints," that looked like paradise to their weary eyes, lying far below them in the midst of leafless trees. The circle of mountains covered with glittering snow, formed a suitable frame for the dull autumnal landscape of the valley.

The sun was setting in all his splendor beyond the great blue lake of brine, as the emigrants hurriedly and merrily formed their last camp, regarding their perils and hardships as nothing now that the goal was reached, which seemed even more fair than their faith had pictured it.

The next day broke bright and warm and an early start was made towards the attractive looking town, that some half suspected would vanish during the night. On account of the wretched condition of the roads, it was evening when they reached the "Emigration Square," a ten acre plot on the southern side of the town where the Mormon recruits camped on their arrival. Much of the illusion of the previous evening faded on a nearer approach, the frightful roads alone being sufficient to cause criticism and apprehension. The houses were small, poor-looking and much scattered; the streets broad, deserted and overgrown with weeds and sunflowers, the dry stalks of which formed thickets about the square. The wagons sank to the axles in the mud, and the square itself, being located on low and marshy ground, presented few advantages as a place of encampment.

Some of the emigrants were not required to spend that night in camp. Bishop Dayton was there to receive his niece and take her to his home. The Mormon President and his counsellors, together with other magnates, had come out to greet the company, and to give them a hearty welcome to the land of promise.

Spencer's mother, a kind and intelligent, but very fanatical old lady, was at the square with one of her daughters, to meet the young missionary (whose praises had resounded throughout Zion during the past year, and they received Hagar most cordially, insisting that she must make her home with them for the present. Many of the emigrants were no less kindly dealt with by relatives, former acquaintances, or new-found friends, who now came forward to offer them such shelter and comfort as they could provide. The entire company were almost imperceptibly absorbed in a few days, some going to the country towns in the various parts of Utah according to the allotment made by the Mormon leaders, others finding employment in Salt Lake at their former trades, or being quartered on such brethren as were able to provide for them during the winter. Most of the young girls and widows had no difficulty in finding homes, and were soon made members in full standing of the families into which they were received, by becoming the "plural wives" of the brethren who gave them this timely shelter.

It was only the year previous that Congress passed its first law against Mormon polygamy, and the practice was never in a more flourishing condition.

The fact that there was a young American widow of good family and education among the newly arrived company of emigrants was not slow in gaining general currency, and Spencer was not only taken to task concerning her, by a certain young 'lily of the valley' to whom he had given more or less definite pledges before he went away, and by the young fellows in the neighborhood who knew that Hagar was domiciled at his father's house; but, when he went to Brigham Young's office a few days later to report, that dignitary, after commending him in his fatherly way, and congratulating him on the success of his labors, rallied him upon the unsaintly deed he had committed in spiriting away the attractive Sister

Miles whose praises had reached him from several sources.

"What do you say, Brother Edwin," asked the Mormon prophet, addressing in a good-natured way, a man with full dark beard whom Spencer had greeted on entering as Bishop Langley—"Shall we cut him off for this contumacious conduct? If the young elders go on in this way, the authorities will not be able to get any wives at all."

"I don't know about that, Brother Brigham," the Bishop replied, "but I was just telling Brother Heber when Brother Spencer came in, that I consider I have the first claim on the young widow, sister Miles, and for this reason: She's come all the way from the Missouri in one of my wagons, and she's lived on my bacon and meal nigh on to three months. Now brethren, including you, Brother Spencer, state your claims."

Though the conversation had turned on a mere jest, the Bishop spoke seriously, and both Brigham Young and his counsellor Heber C. Kimball, were greatly amused by his rejoinder. The prophet winked slyly at Kimball and Spencer, and then said:

"It strikes me, Brother Edwin, that you are a little out in your reckoning, 'and for this reason,'" he continued, quoting the Bishop, "that the pretty widow came all the way from the Missouri in a Church wagon, and has lived fully three months, and is still living on Church bacon and meal—for when you donate wagons, bacon, meal or anything else for the use of the Church, it belongs to the Church. I'll leave that to Brother Heber; and, therefore, as head of the Church and Chief of the emigration fund, I hold that the first choice falls to me. What do you say to that, Brother Heber?"

"Most emphatically correct—nothing more certain," replied the prophet's first Counsellor with a twinkle in his small brown eyes. He then passed his hand over his bald head, which was as round as a bullet, and continued—"But as I come in for a second choice and am so much better looking, I guess both you and the Bishop may as well give in. If the pretty widow wants money she'll have Langley; if she aspires to high station, of course she'll take the president; but if she's lookin' for beauty, I'm her man."

This was merely a bit of characteristic by-play on the

part of Brother Heber, it being a point of honor with him to have his joke whenever occasion offered. He was a merry old soul, and often kept the prophet out of the blues by his funny sayings.

"Well," said Bishop Langley, stretching out his legs, and shoving his hands deep down into his trousers' pockets—"so far I've got the wind of you both, for I've seen her, and she's just A 1, a little fagged and worn out by the trip, but all there, and as pretty as a peach. The first fine day I'm going around to take her for a sleigh ride and show her the town and the surrounding country."

"But you have not been introduced, have you, Brother Langley?" asked Spencer, who was not over pleased by the remarks he had been listening to.

"Barely. I met her on the street with your sister."

"My own belief is that she will remain a widow for some time to come. She is deeply grieved by her bereavement, and nothing would shock her more at present than an offer of marriage, no matter who made it. Of this I am certain. But, of course, its no affair of mine; I only feel the same interest in her as in other members of my company."

The subject was presently dropped, and the prophet resumed his official dignity, which quickly reduced the others to seriousness.

With the setting in of winter, Hagar's experiences began in earnest. The mountains were a sealed barrier between her and the world, and she was entirely isolated in the stronghold of the Mormons. The snows were unusually heavy in the higher passes, and for four months, communication with the civilized world was almost suspended.

But withal, Hagar found the seclusion not unpleasant in her then state of mind, and soon became so much interested in the habits, practices, characters and beliefs of the people with whom her lot had been so strangely cast, that the time passed quickly. While remaining entirely free from the influence of their teachings, she observed closely every phase of their life with which she came in contact. Her circle of acquaintance was gradually extended, and included before the end of winter, all the principal families in the Capital of Zion.

She became a regular and welcome visitor at the prophet's house, which was but a short distance from her home, and gave music lessons to some of his girls, and to those of a few other families who had pianos. To them she seemed a brilliant musician, and her gentle manners together with her other attractive qualities, gained her many friends.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Love never fails to master what he finds,
But works a different way in different minds;
The fool enlightens and the wise he blinds."

—*Dryden.*

After a few months in the Mormon Capital, under the most favorable circumstances for observation of their peculiar institutions, it must be admitted that Hagar was thinking much more of how and whither she might escape than of permanently linking her fate with theirs.

In the Spencer family she had been a favorite from the first. So far from being a burden she endeavored to repay them for shelter and food by assisting with the housework, and by plying the needle continually for some member of the household. But before she had been with them two months the scarlet fever broke out among the children, and she was induced by her friends to move temporarily to Bishop Langley's house.

The Bishop had been several times to call at the Spencer's for the express purpose of seeing her, and had generously offered her a home on the condition that she would open an elementary school for the young children in his ward, especially some ten or twelve of his own, and teach one or two of his girls music; as he had been urging for some time Hagar now decided to accept his offer.

Bishop Langley's house was at that time one of the best and most spacious in Salt Lake City. It was a plain quadrangular structure two stories high, with wings of one story added on three sides, and all built of sun-dried brick, or adobes. Three of his wives and their children dwelt in this mansion. It was comfortably furnished, time and place considered, and at least four rooms, the parlor and three bed-rooms, had carpets on the floors. In the parlor, which was used in common by all, besides a variety of imported easy chairs and the inevitable 'lounge,' stood a fine square piano that was brought from the East by the very train with which

Hagar crossed the plains. This was a mark of distinction which was not then enjoyed by half a dozen families in Utah, and the Bishop's sons and daughters, thirteen in this house, ranging in age from two months to eighteen years, made that piano a constant topic of boastful conversation among their envious playfellows.

The rooms were large and numerous and were divided into three distinct suites, the parlor and entrance hall being the only neutral ground. In each suite was a sitting-room dining-room, kitchen and several bed-rooms.

Hagar had become accustomed to the etiquette of polygamy during her sojourn at the Spencers, where two wives lived under the same roof and took their meals at the same table. She had there heard of the perfection of Brother Langley's domestic arrangements. During her stay she had also discerned that the real Mrs. Spencer was a woman of considerable culture and talent, while the other was much her inferior, and looked upon drudgery as her lot. The elder wife had acquainted Hagar with the fact that "Sister Amanda," as she called the other, had been given by her to her husband as Sarah had given Hagar, her handmaid, to Abraham, and the young girl, hearing so much of these Biblical comparisons became more and more ashamed of her own name and prayed devoutly that these people might never find it out.

As soon as she made known her determination to accept the Bishop's hospitality on the terms he had named, he came for her in his handsome sleigh with bells jingling merrily, and moved her to his home which stood in the most pleasant part of the town. The house was surrounded by a grove of sweet locusts the bare branches of which were swarming with little brown snow birds that left the ground with whirring and chirping, and seemed to be gossiping about the Bishop and his companion as they dashed up the icy road to the front door.

The Bishop gallantly helped his visitor to alight and led her to the drawing room. Nobody met them at the door; nobody was visible.

"I must present you to my wives, Sister Miles," he said, nervously. "Brother Brigham says I'm one of the best specimens of a patriarch of old, in the church.

I've got three wives and thirteen children in this house, and yet you could hear a pin drop. But you'll soon see how it is. Ah! Sister Miles, allow me to introduce you to my wife, Sister Eliza," he said, as a pale and haggard looking woman, attired in a threadbare alpaca dress, came into the room gazing awkwardly about, and stretching out her neck in a strange manner as she extended her clammy hand to the visitor.

"How do ye do," said Sister Eliza in a high pitched drawling voice, while eyeing Hagar from head to foot.

"So they've got scarlet fever at Sister Spencer's, eh? Well I allus said as they wa'n't very healthy lookin', an' I don't think they be."

Hagar was trying to say something in reply when the Bishop interrupted good naturedly:

"I was going to tell you that Sister Eliza, though an excellent woman, is a leetle bit deef—caused by the privations she went through coming out of Nauvoo in '46. But she's an own cousin of the Prophet Joseph, and a true latter-day saint. As the best spare room we've got is in her part of the house, you will make your home with her, and I'm sure you'll like her when you're better acquainted." Then laying his hand affectionately on his wife's shoulder, and putting his lips close to the ear she turned towards him, "Sister Miles," he said, "will be in presently; just tell Sister Hulda to step here a moment."

But the Prophet's cousin only looked puzzled and said "Hey?" and he was obliged to lead her out and call "Hulda" himself.

Hagar began to wonder how she was going to like her new home; and however much she feared that it must possess unpleasant features, she rightly guessed that it possessed a novelty from which she might derive some benefit, since she had thrown off dread and timidity and adopted interest in their stead.

After a brief pause during which she inspected the scanty contents of the parlor, the Bishop came back followed by a stout woman with very fat red hands and ruddy features, whom he introduced as "Sister Hulda." She appeared to be about thirty, and had a very square head thinly covered with short, sandy hair. An unsaintly observer would have been more likely to have

taken her for the family washerwoman, than for a belle of the Harem. She was, in fact, an ordinary sample of the Scandinavian peasants who join the Mormons, a plain, coarse, but good natured and tractable being, not only useful but indispensable in the settlement of a new country. Her redeeming point was that she lacked the boldness which Hagar had remarked in others resembling her; her face was red with blushes, and she was palpably embarrassed.

Sister Hulda merely said "good day" in a faint voice, and seemed glad to return to her kitchen work, in which Hagar's arrival had interrupted her.

For a moment after her exit, the Bishop himself seemed rather confused. He had given notice to "Sister Amelia," of his arrival, but she had not yet appeared, and he foresaw trouble in that quarter. After making a few commonplace remarks to fill in the time, he said:—

"Well, Sister Amelia is certainly detained. I must see what keeps her, if you will kindly excuse me a moment."

Hagar was interested in her experience, and surveyed the room complacently during her host's absence.

The Bishop found Sister Amelia in her bed-room in a hostile frame of mind.

"No, Edwin, I won't. I sha'n't come down," she said emphatically, in the midst of her tears. "It is very cruel of you to bring that strange widow here—she's been the talk ever since she came to the Valley. And then for you, after telling me, as you did the other day, that she 'reminded you of an old sweet-heart,' to fetch her into the house and ask me to receive her! I say it's very cruel:—and I sha'n't do it, no, never."

It was quite evident that Sister Amelia was not as meek as the partners of the Bishop's joys to whom Hagar had been introduced. Her mode of objecting was rather persuasive than declaratory, but none the less effective on that account; indeed, the Bishop thought it more so, as he could readily overcome pronounced obstreperousness, but was balked by Sister Amelia's tearful tactics.

In spite of all his arts he could not induce her to come down to welcome his guest. So long as he merely

urged her in a kindly voice and by friendly arguments she kept repeating that she knew very well what it would come to, and that she could not have believed her dear Edwin would be so cruel to her. Though the Bishop had three other wives at the farm, a few miles from the city, nothing that he said concerning his disinterested motives could convince Sister Amelia that he had not formed a nice little scheme for adding the "strange widow" as No. 7 to his already moderately numerous family. At last he became angry, with the usual result that Sister Amelia fell into a speechless sulk, and became as immovable as if she had grown to the spot where she sat. As he was taking his leave after mumbling something about her having a temper like a mule, she said between her sobs:

"Don't you remember that you promised never to take another wife if I would have you? We are not two years married, and yet——"

"Never mind," said the Bishop, angrily, "your bad conduct and jealousy have long since absolved me from that promise, and I am now free to do as I please. You needn't expect me to get over your stubborn disobedience for some time!" She called to him as he went out, but he shut the door with emphasis, and descended to the parlor where Hagar was beginning to feel impatient.

"I guess you'll have to excuse Sister Amelia to-day, but of course you'll meet later on. She has been rather spoilt by the rest of us, especially by Hulda; but she's a nice girl and has a first-rate education—plays the piano too—not so well as you do, but right well, considering. You'll like her, I think, and as she's a strong dislike to house-work, I want to have her help you in the school."

He moved about restlessly as he spoke, but finally took a chair facing Hagar, leaned back with his hands clasped over his head, and continued:—

"Well, Sister Miles, what do you think of the great Latter-day work by this time?"

Many of the Saints had asked her the same question, and this was not the first time the Bishop had broached the subject; she was not, therefore, wholly unprepared to reply.

"I am much impressed with all I have seen; but, you know, I have only been here about two months. It is certainly wonderful to see what the Saints have done in a perfectly wild country in fifteen years, it proves that God has blessed them," she said earnestly.

"You are quite right, quite right, but how do you like the institution of celestial or plural marriage? Of course, as you have not yet received the gift of the holy ghost, you will not understand its awful mysteries —but, I mean simply regarding it with worldly eyes, as yet only partly opened by the first reception of the gospel?"

"I fear," said Hagar, after a momentary hesitation, "that I am not yet prepared to answer as to that."

"But, for yourself; you can tell whether your faith is sufficiently strong to warrant you, to enable you, to enter the celestial estate."

"You forget, Bishop Langley," she said, sadly, with her eyes cast down, "that being so lately bereaved, I could not think of—of marriage."

"Oh! forgive me," he replied, lowering his voice, and speaking apologetically. "I was over-zealous; the fact is we see very few women here like you, Sister Miles, and as for myself, I know how to appreciate a fine woman. You might not think it, but it's quite true, that my family, the Langleys of Ohio, is one of the highest-toned families in the West. Of course they're down on me for joining the Saints, but as I expect to repay their spite by aiding in their final salvation in the world to come, I don't much mind what they think of me now. I'm only forty-three, pretty well off, and I expect to be at the head of the church some day (this, in confidence, of course.) I don't suppose I'm quite perfect, but you can ask my wives, and see for yourself what kind of a man I am. When you learn how this house is managed, I want to take you out to my farm; its a sight worth seeing in summer: all my little tow-heads helping with the crops, and picking mulberry leaves for the silkworms. I sent twenty bushels of cocoons East last year."

The Bishop continued in this strain for some time, making his companion fully conversant with all the details he wished her to know at that period, about

himself and his worldly affairs. She was then resigned to the care of Sister Eliza, in whose house she was to reside.

Hagar evinced considerable tact in her singular position; she made a success of the school, and not only became a great favorite among the forty odd children who were placed under her care, but also won the friendship of Amelia, who was far from being a disagreeable companion. While the first Mrs. Langley was endeavoring to coach her for the celestial bliss of polygamy, with all the eloquence and credulity of a "cousin of the prophet," Amelia was giving her a version of the matter much more in keeping with her own preconceived opinions. She was really becoming quite contented in the consciousness that she was making her own way successfully, when an incident occurred which startled her from her sense of security.

The school house was a small adobe building of one room that had been Hulda's residence in early days, before the present mansion was built. It was in a lot adjoining the mansion, but was almost concealed (entirely so in summer) by the orchard that lay between.

Spencer had called a few times at the Bishop's house to see "Sister Miles" but had been coldly received, and at last was told flatly by the Bishop, who on each occasion had met him in the hall, that he was not a welcome visitor. He at first thought of asking Hagar as to that; but on reflection decided to ask her simply if he might call now and then to have a word with her at the schoolhouse, as he believed the Langleys, especially the Bishop, did not like him. She granted him permission and he called once or twice during the afternoon recess, which lasted from three to half past, and enjoyed a friendly chat with her while the children were at play. One of Bishop Langley's boys told him of these visits; he was very angry and at once concluded that Hagar, while having put him off on the plea of bereavement was giving a more favorable hearing to the young Elder. A crisis in Hagar's Mormon experience, was drawing near.

"Ed. Langley," as the bishop had been familiarly called by the "prophet," and the Elders with whom he had associated in early days, was not a man to be trifled with. He had already gained a reputation as a danger-

ous rival in his pursuit of Amelia, that was sufficient to prevent those acquainted with him from entering the lists against him when female charms were the prize. The Spencers and others considered that they might as well change Sister Miles' name to Langley from the moment she entered the Bishop's house, for it never occurred to them that any woman in the world would be such a fool as to refuse a man so rich and handsome, and one who stood so well with Brigham Young.

The immediate neighbors, and even the school children already addressed Hagar, by accident, of course, as "Sister Langley," and yet it had never seriously occurred to her that the Bishop would be an applicant for her hand.

On the evening of the day that the Bishop learned of Spencer's visits, he determined to speak plainly to Sister Miles concerning his intentions. But Amelia was watching him as she had done ever since Hagar had been a resident with "Sister Eliza." She had thus far prevented any tete-a-tete in that part of the house which would give her "dear Edwin" an opportunity of making love to one who would probably supplant her in the rank of favorite. Hulda and her children had been aiding her in her artful plans. Her custom was to give Hagar a pressing invitation to come to supper with her, and at about nine o'clock to go with her to the door of her own apartment after she said "good night" to the Bishop. Langley noted the cunning thus displayed by his latest and youngest wife, but his desire to possess the 'pretty widow' became stronger every day. He finally found it difficult to delay his declaration. Amelia was a good looking young woman, possessing personal attractions far above the average of the Mormon women; at their balls and other festivities she had always been an acknowledged belle for whose hand Brigham Young himself was at one time a candidate. But the Bishop being an earnest Saint, was no doubt anxious to show his zeal for 'building up the Kingdom,' and was at this time manifesting such symptoms of restlessness and precipitation, as are usually supposed to characterize a lover in pursuit of an object not yet possessed. Amelia was evidently eclipsed, and to the Bishop's mind was sinking deeper and deeper

into the shade, while the young widow was not only dazzling his fancy, but tearing at his heart's strings. He must see her that night in spite of Amelia's caprices and all other considerations, and before she came home from calling at the Spencer's, after school, he had everything arranged to facilitate a lengthy interview.

Amelia was very fond of the theatre; much more fond, indeed, than had hitherto been agreeable to her spouse. The local company, which was composed of leading young elders and good Mormon maids and matrons of more or less talent, were giving that night a second performance of Macbeth at the church Theatre, with the Tabernacle choir as the witches, a subsequent apostle as Hecate, and a pet of the President's as the aspiring thane. Thither the Bishop proposed to conduct Amelia, much to her satisfaction. Meanwhile "Sister Eliza" was duly instructed to inform her lodger that the Bishop wished to speak with her, and to detain her in her sitting-room until he arrived.

The ruse fully met his expectations: Amelia was duly ensconced in a cushioned seat in the parquette beside one of Hulda's boys; the Bishop was conveniently reminded by one of the brethren of an important "priesthood meeting," and reluctantly tore himself away from his darling's side, and returned home as fast as a good horse hitched to a light sleigh could take him.

Though he had taken off the bells and driven quietly into the barnyard, which was some distance from the house, his return was promptly known to Hulda. Her chief news-bearer was at the theatre, but her son "Billy," a roguish little blonde of ten years, was used to aiding his elder brother in all sorts of domestic conspiracies, and was delighted with the opportunity to act alone. He was in his stocking feet romping with the other small children in Hulda's sitting room preparatory to going to bed, but was prompt to station himself at the head of the stairs at his mother's bidding, whence he could reconnoitre the entrance hall below, and the door to "Sister Eliza's" apartment which opened off the hall to the right of the front door. The play of the children went on without interruption, and the Bishop, as he paused on the threshold, never felt more tolerant of their boisterousness. He was well aware that Hulda

was no less opposed than Amelia, to his having any more wives, and was very anxious to keep them both in ignorance of his present affair until he had arranged the details.

He stepped inside and closed the door softly; threw off his over-coat which was covered with snow, brushed the icy flakes from his beard, and completed his preparations by taking off his heavy boots, and putting on a pair of warm red carpet slippers that were kept on a chair behind the door. Then, supposing the coast to be clear, he stepped lightly to the door of Sister Eliza's sitting room, and entered without delay.

Billy went back and told his mother, who was fully conscious that the Bishop's unwonted devotion was bestowed on the "pretty widow," for he had not been known to seek a tete-a-tete with Eliza for several years. When the other children were out of hearing she said to Billy:

"Your father's going to marry the school-ma'am, Billy, so you can just play any trick on him you like—only be careful you're not caught." Then she continued to herself—"I'll tell Amelia of this: there's just no use of talkin'—Edwin never knows when to stop!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

Billy was not the boy to obtain a license to do mischief without availing himself of its privileges. Like most of the Bishop's children he regarded his father with a distant awe not altogether unmixed with dislike, and though he had once been convicted of putting a toad in the pocket of the prelate's overcoat, for which he was severely punished, and on another occasion implicated with an older brother in mixing some coarse grains of gun-powder among the old gentleman's smoking tobacco, from which charge he escaped with a scolding, he was always ready for a lark, especially if his mother put him up to it, and torture could not have induced him to inculpate that parent.

In a Mormon family the boys of each wife frequently regard her as their especial charge, whom they are to defend from the other women and from the leige lord of all. The children are bound to hear and to notice the complaints and griefs of their mother no matter how quietly or resignedly they are borne, and Hulda had a candid way of telling her children what she thought, which had the effect of stripping the Bishop of much of his majesty in their sight. Beyond their shy "yes sir," and "no sir," when he spoke to them, there was nothing they could say to him, for he showed them no fatherly affection that would draw them to him and make them feel they had a place in his heart. So long as they had plain food and clothes and a place to sleep, he thought he fulfilled his duty towards them; and for the rest, they were as strangers.

Billy slipped down the stairs as stealthily as a cat, and after listening a moment at Eliza's door, and satisfying himself the Bishop was engaged in conversation, he stood looking at his coat, hat, and boots, thinking what most troublesome sport he could indulge in. As if waiting for a better idea he took one of the boots and set it to catch a stream of water that was trickling down from the snow on the coat. He watched it drip for

a few seconds, and then, placing the other boot over a small puddle that had formed on the floor, suddenly began to shake with laughter, and made a most hideous grimace in his endeavor to keep from laughing aloud.

He knew that his father must return to the theatre with the sleigh to bring Amelia home, and it had occurred to him that he might render that enterprize extremely troublesome, by simply hiding the key of the barn-yard gate. He no sooner thought of it than he gave an amused look towards the boots congratulating himself that they would keep the floor from getting wet, and went up the stairs almost bursting with merriment. Quickly putting on his shoes he hurried out by a back door, assured himself that the heavy gates were locked, and then took the key from the peg on which it was kept in the stable and hid it near by. He soon after crept upstairs to bed without saying a word to his mother, though he found a piece of bread and molasses lying on the table as the reward of his ingenuity.

Though the Bishop could hardly be accused of oversensibility, it was some little time before he could bring himself to speak to Hagar on the subject that was troubling him. Sister Eliza sat by the fire, knitting, and apparently oblivious of Edwin's purpose, though she was as fully aware of it as himself. Hagar was sewing, but for some unknown reason felt rather uneasy. She noted that the Bishop spoke in a lower voice than usual, and that he seemed to have come to spend the evening, a thing he had not previously done since she came to his house.

When she had answered his queries about the school, she got up with the intention of withdrawing to her own chamber; but he told her plainly he had come to talk with her and begged her to remain. She resumed her seat with the unpleasant consciousness that she was his only auditor for Eliza's "deefness" prevented her from hearing a word he said.

"Its something more important than schools, Sister Miles, that's brought me here this evening," he began, with considerably more embarrassment than usually characterized his matter-of-fact speech. Hagar was slightly discomposed by this, but went on with her

work, hoping it might not lead to the subject foreshadowed by her fears. He continued after a pause:

"Its nothing short of the eternal welfare of your soul as well as my own. I'm in solemn earnest, and I hope you'll give me a fair hearing." There was a slight tremor in his voice, and he moved nervously on his chair.

"I hope," said Hagar, "that I have always listened attentively when you spoke to me about religion."

"Passably, Sister, only passably. You have not embraced the full meaning of the everlasting covenant—you have not tasted of the sweet mysteries of the Endowment House. You cannot know the Celestial state until you enter the Celestial life, and you not only keep aloof yourself, but I am sorry to say that you sort with others whose fidelity is not above suspicion."

Hagar felt her face grow pale; but the Bishop did not look at her. Keeping his eyes turned towards the hearth, he went on:

"I know nothing about this young Spencer except that he is a pauper, and the slight standing he has obtained in the priesthood will not avail to make the house of Israel a pleasant place for him if he persists in his present course. He is criticising things here in Zion, and giving too loud a vent to what he thinks. It may cost him dear."

"You know that it was he who saved our train from the Indians?" said Hagar, taking advantage of a pause.

"I heard the tale—but it's nothing more:—the explosion that saved the train was a thunderbolt. Many of the saints saw it fall from the clouds upon the stockade. Surely he has not made you believe that yarn about the bake-kettle?" said Langley, with a sneer.

"Yes, I believe it, because he came to me in the darkness that night, and said he was going to blow up the savages. I know also that he exposed his own life to great peril when he approached that fort, and he told me the details of how he threw the improvised bombshell among them."

"And you like him, then, because you think he is a great hero? And do you want to marry a man on that account without asking whether he can keep you or not?"

"No, Bishop Langley, I do not mean to marry at all,"

she replied firmly. But I thought you came to talk to me about the eternal welfare of my soul?"

"So I have. There is no welfare for a woman's soul unless she marries—marries in the everlasting covenant. You must fully realize this fact before I can tell you all I have to say. Woman's soul must be saved by her husband through the holy covenant of celestial marriage; there's no other way, as you must know if you have learned the alphabet of the gospel of the last days. I can save and exalt you. By your sharing my kingdom in the heavens, I can obtain for you a bright immortal crown, and you will become a queen of the highest glory and exaltation, the dazzling star of my celestial bliss—"

"Do you believe all that, Bishop Langley?" The Bishop was reiterating with a more or less genuine enthusiasm, some of the pyrotechnical imagery of the "prophet Joseph" whom he had often heard dilating in a similar style for hours at a time. But Hagar was already fully acquainted with that portion of the Mormon doctrine, the elder Mrs. Spencer having especially pointed out its beauties to her. Her question rather staggered him, coming as it did during a momentary pause in his most effective speech; but he replied after a slight hesitation:

"Maybe that's the trouble—I believe it and you don't? Is that so? You don't believe that Celestial marriage is a true doctrine?" The Bishop spoke in a tone which seemed to indicate a suspicion that he had been taking too much for granted.

"So far as I have seen," said Hagar, quietly, "marriages seem about as much of a terrestrial affair among the saints as anywhere else. Your wives work for you and stay at home to attend the house and the children. I may appear narrow, but I can discern nothing celestial in the lot of woman here among the saints—they are mere drudges like other women but unlike their poor sisters in other communities, have not the undivided love and devotion of a husband to comfort them in the midst of their hardships—"

Hagar knew that while she had made her meaning but partially clear, she had made what was rather a venturesome speech in the ears of a Mormon bishop. But she was determined to venture so much if only to see what would come of it.

"The celestial life," replied the Mormon, deliberately, "is as the word implies, to begin in the celestial world. We are only preparing for it here. Every true latter-day saint will be the King over a separate world, and the family of his offspring here will form the groundwork of his Kingdom there. The spirit world is full of spirits that are waiting for earthly tabernacles; but the select of these can only be accommodated by bodies that are formed under the celestial covenant. The mystery of this great doctrine requires more time than I have at my disposal now, for proper explanation. But you have listened to the discourses of the prophets and apostles of these latter-days, and you, Sister, surely have not come to Zion with the deliberate purpose of shunning all the blessings and privileges they have promised you?"

Hagar was uncertain how to reply and hesitated so long that the Bishop was beginning to think she could not answer him. She had seen a good deal of her host, and had formed a clear judgment as to his character, to the effect that he was not a man of high principle even according to his own code. That was why she brought forward the question of belief. And now she was thinking of two other points in the same connection, the first was his promise to Amelia that he would marry no more wives, and the other, the new law of Congress prohibiting polygamy. She had no desire either to displease him or to render him her enemy, for she knew he was venomous towards those he disliked, and she wished to ask him some day to assist her to get away from Zion.

"Surely," he continued, with a certain satisfaction that she did not reply at once, "it ought to be our highest pleasure to seize the benefits extended to us by the Gospel."

"That is doubtless true, Bishop Langley," said Hagar, dropping her work in her lap and raising her pensive eyes towards him, "but there are two difficulties in connection with what you have been saying, which I would thank you to explain. I have heard a great deal about the law that Congress recently passed forbidding any further practice of plural marriage—"

"Yes," he said, interrupting her impatiently. "But

that's an unconstitutional law; Congress has no right to interfere with our religious practices. That's what has caused the great war that is now ruining the country and that has divided it into two nations. Congress wanted to interfere with the constitutional rights of the South, to deny them the rights of property guaranteed to them by the founders of the Government; but you see the South is powerful, and will not submit to the wrong. It is true that we cannot now resist by force; but we can go on practicing celestial marriage in spite of their unjust laws. Our law is from God, and we shall not ask human law-makers if we may follow it.

"When the South establishes its independence, we shall become a member of that confederacy which is now shaking the corrupt Union to its center. The South will recognize that the Bible which shows slavery to be a divine institution, also shows plural marriage in the same light, and we shall triumph when the Union which seeks to oppress, and has so long persecuted us, is shattered all to pieces!"

The Bishop spoke with vehemence towards the last, and sawed the air with his arms as if he were addressing a ward meeting.

"You think, then, that the Rebels will conquer?" Hagar asked with a pathetic anxiety in her voice.

"The Southerners? yes, they will conquer. You should not say Rebels. People are not rebels when they fight for their rights. Oh, yes, they will conquer; the Union armies can never recover from their recent disasters; the North is discouraged, indeed there is every reason to believe that before this, a treaty of peace has been signed granting the South a separate existence, and indemnity for the cruel injury done her."

Hagar felt like uttering a cry of pain; but she controlled her feelings and resumed her work, listening as he went on:

"God is on the side of the South, because he is on ours, and our prayers go up to him in their behalf. The Constitution was inspired by God, and granted religious freedom no less plainly and unequivocally than it legalized the sacred institution of slavery."

Hagar had heard many of the saints make remarks

intimating that their sympathies leaned towards the cause of the South, but she had not known for certain that the Mormon Church placed so much reliance on the success of the Confederacy. The discovery of that fact in connection with so much else that was disagreeable added to her anxiety, and she was unable to see her way out of a decidedly uncomfortable dilemma. Why had she ever been so foolish as to come to Utah?

The Bishop looked at her a moment as if expecting her to say something, but she plied her needle in silence, devoutly hoping that he would soon withdraw. Presently he moved his chair a little nearer, and leaning towards her, said entreatingly:

"But what are the other difficulties, dear Sister?"

"I have heard that you made a promise to Sister Amelia when you married her two years ago, that you would never take another wife. They said at the Spencer's that she would not marry you until you did so."

"That was simply a temporary matter to please her vanity. I never meant it seriously, and she knew very well that my religion would not permit me to make any such foolish pledge. Perhaps, so far as I am personally concerned, I might prefer to have only one wife; but we must obey the Lord's laws, not make laws unto ourselves where we have His to guide us. If God requires me to take another wife I am at once absolved from a promise like that, and Amelia herself would be the first to admit it."

There was an almost irresistible desire in Hagar's mind to ask him how he became so conveniently aware of the requirements of the Divinity with relation to such minor details of his life; but she had become accustomed to that species of cant, and now felt a loathing for the hypocrite before her, whom she believed to be as insincere to his supposed religion as he was false in his private life.

Hagar had been conscious from the first that Amelia regarded her as a possible rival, and that she had exhausted every artifice in trying to prevent the Bishop from seeing her alone. She knew also that he had obtained the present interview through a cunning trick. But she could not lose sight of the fact that her situa-

tion demanded prudence. She therefore determined that whatever he might say she would neither speak a rash word nor give him a decisive answer at present. While she had made no strong professions of religion, nor entered into any of the 'mysteries' she was taught to regard as a necessity, she had been careful not to define her attitude; but tried to content herself with doing her present duty, and leaving the future to Providence, for whose help she humbly prayed.

"I think you are mistaken about Sister Amelia. She will not consent to your taking another wife."

As Hagar spoke the Bishop seemed to devour her with his eyes. He rose and almost sprang towards her in his eagerness. Grasping her hand passionately, he exclaimed with a kind of fiendish rapture:

"Are you so sure of that, dear Sister, that you will agree to say 'yes' if she does?"

His look had chilled her, but his touch seemed to create a horrid sickness in her heart—a nauseous disgust that made her shudder. She could not speak. He held her hand fast and went on:

"Only pronounce that little word and make me the happiest man on earth. For I love you—have loved you from the moment I first saw you. I have never felt towards any woman as I do towards you—you have inspired me with a kind of infatuation never before known to my heart. My tongue's loose, now, and I must tell you all. You are my sunlight, the air I breathe, the hope that makes me love life. God has sent you to me to crown with bliss what I have done for duty. You are mine by right, by the very gift of Heaven!" He spoke rapidly, but in a subdued tone. Sister Eliza must have caught the sound of his voice, however, for she turned round and took a sly glance over her spectacles, then indulged in a pinch of snuff, and resumed her knitting. She was soothed by the pleasant conviction that Edwin was teaching her young guest some of the mysteries of the latter day gospel.

Hagar drew away her hand as soon as she could without exhibiting too much of her real feelings towards her polygamous suitor.

"You doubt that Amelia will agree? Why, she will come to you and plead my cause if I ask her to. You

do not answer, Sister." Hagar had resumed her seat, and he had stepped back a pace or two well aware that he had met with a check though there was no marked outward token of it.

When she felt that she could speak without betraying the anger she was keeping back, Hagar replied, while looking at him calmly:

"I am too selfish, and jealous, to occupy the position of a plural wife. Besides, Bishop Langley, I am in no way suited for the honor you offer me, of becoming your seventh wife, and I trust you will let the matter rest where it is. What you propose is impossible."

"One moment. Do you realize that you are rejecting the man who worships you?" He spoke in a soft, pleading voice. Hagar was more startled than she would have been if he had begun to threaten her. "I do not believe," he continued earnestly, "that you are suited to be a polygamous wife. You would be my only one, in all except the fulfillment of my religious duties to the rest, You shall be my only wife. I am rich, I will pension off the others, provide for them and their children, and live alone for you. I never loved a woman till I saw you, and I believed I never should. But I deceived myself—it has come at last—it devours my heart—it seems to take posession of my soul; and you, you, dear Sister, are the cause—" The clock in a large wooden case on the mantel struck eleven, and a new agitation began to disturb the Bishop's mind. He must go to the theatre at once with the sleigh to bring Amelia home.

Sister Eliza also noted the time and said:

"If yer goin' to fetch 'Meelie, Edwin, ye'd better be startin; the theayter must be nearly out, I guess."

Hagar would have been glad to thank Sister Eliza for that speech.

"Yes," replied the Bishop, "that is true. But we can resume our conversation at another time, Sister Miles. I will say good night; and may I not trust that we shall understand each other?"

"Good night: I hope we may," Hagar rejoined.

Immediately after his exit she went to her chamber, where she fell on her knees at the bedside and wept as she had not done for some time.

The hall-lamp had been turned low and was burning

dimly, giving the Bishop a decidedly crestfallen appearance as he seated himself near the hat-rack and took off his blood-red slippers. He pulled on the left boot with some difficulty, and ejaculated a phrase or two which would have been very like profanity coming from any other than a Bishop, when his foot came in contact with the water at the bottom. Seizing the other he turned it up and poured its liquid contents on the floor, blaming himself for his stupidity in placing them where they would catch the melting snow from his coat. That came from falling in love! Quite twenty minutes were lost in procuring a dry pair of socks and boots, as he was not certain in which wife's apartment he could lay his hands on them. But he was presently ready, and hurried to the barn where the man had the sleigh in waiting.

"Did you put the gate-key in your pocket, sir?" asked the man.

"No," the Bishop answered, sourly, "I hung it in its proper place."

"Well, its not there, sir."

Find it they could not. And after spending nearly half an hour in the fruitless search several minutes were next consumed in finding a bar to pry out the staples. It was after midnight when the Bishop drove up to the theatre to find it in darkness.

As Amelia was not waiting in the portico he concluded she had walked home so he drove there with all haste. Edwin junior, who had been with her at the theatre, had reached home and was foraging in his mother's larder for something to eat. He said that Amelia had gone to pass the night with Miss Spencer as she could n't walk through the snow, and that she was terribly riled about that priesthood meeting.

CHAPTER XXV.

Charles Spencer's views concerning the glories of Zion had undergone a remarkable evolution in the few months since his return. The ideal of a boy's ignorance was giving place to the real of a man's experience. Contact with the outer world, while it had taxed his endurance, had also clarified his vision. Upon subjects of which he had formerly thought nothing he now became severely critical, and the 'Kingdom of God,' began to assume the aspect of a small trading mart. He perceived that the apostles and elders had secured to themselves the time-honored privileges that belonged to the priests of Baal and a long line of their successors; that Brigham Young had become a nabob and a despot, and that on the little scene of Mormondom was being played a new version of what a scoffer in Ohio had called the Gospel game.

Despite Bishop Langley's open antagonism and secret enmity, Spencer succeeded in meeting Hagar from time to time, and he thought he was more benefitted and impressed by his brief communion with her than by the canny wisdom of the prophets as delivered in the Tabernacle. If he had been of the kind to be flattered into submission the spirit of revolt that was rising in him would surely have been checked, for, even after he had given unmistakable evidence of defection of which Brigham Young was fully informed, the President intrusted him with weighty confidences, and even invited him to 'bear testimony' before the assembled people. He was willing to parley with the young malcontent while a hope of retaining him in the church harness remained; for he saw that Spencer's course was undefined, while he miscalculated the force of his character and the depth of his discontent. It was the prophet's custom to condone symptoms of rebellion so long as they were not made visibly manifest; and thus a practiced hypocrite might count upon his favor, while an honest man who dared to differ and to tell him so, was quickly consigned to the rack of his scorn.

Haunted by the image of Hagar, goaded by his sense of poverty and dependence, and conscious that he was growing more and more out of touch with the priesthood and his church, Spencer was far from happy. He was pathetically warned by his mother to beware of the deceit and craft of the devil, but the gloomy, vacillating and meditative mood which now became habitual to him, enabled him to discern only the craft and deceit of the priesthood. He saw the tithing of the people pouring in. It was marvellous in volume and in the regularity of its current. Into the great maw of Bel went the produce of the land and the priests were there with their baskets to catch all that the Dragon could not dispose of. The magnates built great houses, surrounded themselves with high walls, and lived in luxury, waited upon by foreign menials. They drew a bounteous sustenance from the busy hive they held under tribute, while the toilers themselves dwelt patiently in the small log cabin or the adobe cottage, and won their daily bread by rugged conflict with the earth.

Before he went away and during his absence, if he had thought at all about these things, it was merely to regard them in the common way, as essential conditions to the building up of "the Kingdom." But he now said:

"Alas! The Kingdom is a despotism. We take the name of 'Israel' and go to work to realize the picture; set up a Solomon without his wisdom, and the temples, palaces, concubines and oppression naturally follow. What is common to all systems, the aggrandizement of the few at the cost of the many, was the condition we were to escape, but is the one most vital here."

He regarded with keen distaste the hereditary possibilities he knew to be his own: high Sacerdotal rank, and a hand at the money bags of Israel. He had seen sons and grandsons succeed their sires in civil and religious offices, and knew that the hierarchy of Church and State which was one and inseparable, had adopted this effete principle solely for the promotion of its own ends whether good or bad. He deliberately made up his mind never to become a pensioner on such a system.

But, for the present, whatever might be his ultimate decision, he must play the part of time server. His

sympathy was still with the cause of his people, but his reason said that their lot could not be his.

He had not been able to approach Hagar as to the subject that outweighed all others in his reflections; but his attentions to her had already excited gossip, and he knew that if he openly declared his discontent she would be branded as a cause of it and placed in great peril. It was for her sake and not his own that he chose the prudent course, though, as a matter of fact, the enmity of Langley alone was sufficient to make him cautious of being placed under the ban of Apostacy while winter held its impenetrable barriers between Utah and the world. He worked on patiently and with the consciousness that he was not free from suspicion and espionage. He listened to plausible priestly lies without betraying by look or word that he knew the truth; pretended to believe prophecies that were framed after the fact, and revelations that he had seen compounded by designing men.

It was some time since he had seen Hagar alone. His falling out with Langley prevented his visiting the Bishop's house, and the brooding and unsettled state of his mind made him indifferent to social intercourse. After the long office hours of the tithing department where he was engaged, he would go home and pace his room, or make an effort to read. Sometimes he would mount an old nag that a relative in the country had given his father, and ride slowly past Hagar's school, in the hope of getting a chance to salute her, but she was always out of sight.

Langley was among the first to suspect and circulate the story of the young man's growing scepticism. One day after an interview on very mundane affairs with Brigham Young, he said to the prophet, in his officious way:

"Young Charles Spencer seems to be a good deal of a favorite with you, Brother Brigham?"

"Yes, so long as he lives his religion and obeys counsel. But why did you ask that? By your tone I judge there is something back of the question."

"You have noticed nothing?"

"Well," said the President, raising his eye brows and taking off his spectacles to rub them with a cotton ban-

danna, "Well, may be I have—but what have you noticed?"

"For one thing, that he is associating with the vile apostate, Doctor Robinson."

"What? You don't mean that, do you? He has not gone so far as that!"

"Yes, he has. They were always fast friends as you know, but Spencer went back on him when he apostatized. The change in his own heart now makes the apostate congenial to him, and they have been seen walking together at night on the hill by the arsenal, and along the road to the Hot Springs. I told you long ago that Robinson ought to be dealt with, and offered to take the matter in hand. He never was really devoted to the church. The pretence served to gain him a foothold, and he has lived in open defiance of authority for nearly four years. Many of the women are going to him for his nostrums, and his influence for evil is increasing every day."

"I will see about this at once. You might have an eye kept on Spencer and also on the pill-maker. I have noticed Brother Charles' uneasiness, but thought it grew out of his sickly infatuation over the pretty widow. But if he thinks he can hoodwink me, and loll into apostacy under my very nose, he shall have plenty of rope I can promise him."

The prophet made no effort to conceal his irritation, and the Bishop, seeing that he had achieved his purpose, soon after withdrew. Directly he had gone a boy was summoned to tell Spencer that President Young wished to see him. The answer came that he was out and would not be back before five o'clock.

President Young struck a small gong on the desk in front of him, and a tall straight man with broad shoulders and a generally raw-boned appearance, entered by a small side-door. He looked, at first glance, like an American Indian, but was a proselyte from the Sandwich Islands. He was a messenger and assistant bodyguard to the President. Having received his orders in a few words he backed out through the narrow door with a deferential salute. The president awaited his return. He was not absent more than twenty minutes, and came back quite out of breath.

"Well?" demanded President Young.

"He was there, sir. When I was block away I see the old pinto mare tie to post in front of Robinson house, but 'fore I git there I seen him come out, git on horse, and go down road like he goin' to Jordon bridge."

The Kanaka made a faithful report: from Dr. Robinson's Spencer went direct to Hagar's school, driven on by a wild desire to tell her of the heavy woes that were oppressing him.

"I know not what to say to her, but it will out if I can but find her alone. I will tell her my misery, and lay my heart at her feet."

The small one-roomed building in which the school was held, was located in an orchard near the Langley mansion. The snow was trampled down by the children around the house, and huge balls had been rolled up from among the trees where it lay deepest, and formed into high banks for breastworks from behind which the urchins pelted each other in mimic warfare. They were engaged in this diversion when Spencer rode up, and he knew it was within a minute of the time to call them in. Tying his horse to the gate post he knocked at the school-house door, and was admitted by Hagar. As he entered, a tow-headed boy of about fifteen years might have been seen to quit his play and go post-haste towards the Bishop's house. There was a standing reward of a quarter of a dollar in silver, for the bearer of news of Spencer's appearance at the school, and the Bishop's son Tobias, though not over quick at his studies, was alert to win the spy's reward on the first opportunity.

Hagar extended her hand in a friendly manner, saying with singular earnestness:

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Spencer, but I am sorry you have come here."

"I will go away at once, then," he replied, a little hurt.

"It will be best for us both. We are watched, and I do not think you are free from danger. I was foolish to have come here, but I must now submit, as there is no escape."

To his imagination her words meant more than she intended.

"Submit! you surely will not submit to this Blue

Beard? You can leave here in the spring and return to your people."

"We are in danger, I tell you. I must consult my present safety. Consult yours by going at once. I must call in the school." She already had the small bell in her hand when he came in, and she now threw the door open that he might depart before she rang. He was stepping back from the door, raising his hat in salute, when he was seized by the shoulders and hurled to the ground. The Bishop had come through the garden, and darted around the corner of the school-house like a lion that had been crouching for his prey. Spencer sprang to his feet in an instant, and leveled his revolver, one of heavy calibre he had that day borrowed from Dr. Robinson, at the Bishop's head. The children had run in screaming with fright, and Hagar shut the door in dread of an impending tragedy. Hearing the voices of the men outside, she listened.

"The only reason I don't put day-light through you, Bishop Langley," said Spencer, with dangerous composure, "is because I know that it would bring harm to that helpless woman in there—worse harm than you can do her if I let you live. I know that if I killed you here now as you intended to kill me had you found me unprepared, I should be lynched as if I had been an assassin. I'll spare you, but you shall make me a promise, and further, you shall swear to it; you are not famous for veracity. Its a wonder to me that a hypocrite like you doesn't make apostates of half the community. Raise your right hand and repeat after me: "In the name of Almighty God, I swear that I will not harm or permit others to harm by word or act the woman known as Sister Miles; and that I will use my influence to prevent the cut-throats of Zion from doing bodily injury to the man known as Charles Spencer."

The Bishop paused and looked around to see if help was not near before he would comply. But as there was no relief at hand, and Spencer made his weapon click impatiently, the redoubtable ecclesiastic swallowed his resentment, or rather choked it down, and repeated the oath with sonorous though unwilling accents. The young man then compelled him to turn his face to the wall, and leisurely resumed his journey towards home.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"So blinded are we by our passions that we suffer more to be damned than to be saved."—*Colton.*

The choice epithets of Bishop Langley on this occasion can form no part of this record. Suffice it to say that they embodied rather the ecclesiastical than the Christian spirit, and both spirit and epithets were imitated from his superiors in authority.

He glanced towards the school-house windows with a mingled feeling of hatred, revenge and remorse. In that little square adobe hovel was the woman for whom he would give more than life itself, and down the road went the man who dared to interfere between him and his dearest object. The thought that Sister Miles might have witnessed his humiliation tortured him to the quick, and his first impulse was to wreak summary vengeance on its cause. But there was rather too much personal risk about this to render it an attractive expedient just then, and he felt no doubt of finding his opportunity. On second thought, timid women like Sister Miles always held their hands over their ears when men quarreled in their hearing, and refrained from looking at the contestants for fear of witnessing something shocking. He would go home and wait until school was dismissed, and then, with whatever result, make a final effort to bring the pretty widow to terms.

As he turned away he heard the children's voices singing merrily their lesson of the State Capitals:—"The Eastern States we first will mention, six of them in number. The state of Maine, Augusta, on the Kennebec River," etc.

This evidence that the teacher was employed with her duties reassured him and he paused to listen. Ever and anon there was a break in the singing and the gentle voice of the woman who thus late in life had enthralled him, came to him like soft thrilling melody. It calmed him. If she would but say the one word which, in spite

of his hopes to the contrary, he seemed to have a foreboding she would not say, he believed for the moment that he might feel and actually be at peace with the world and with himself. He might be able to shift his course from among the snags and shoals where he had been battling so long, back to the normal and prudent highway which his father and other men he had once admired, had traveled without disaster. His thoughts were far from being well-defined, but he was, at least, half conscious of a plan by which the "pretty widow," as Hagar was now commonly called in Zion, was to aid him in attaining a more comfortable altitude than he then enjoyed. The "privileges" of the latter-day Gospel had begun to pall upon him at the time he married Amelia, but since he met the young stranger he had grown cold and formal with the celestial partners of his joys. Hagar's declination of the privileged estate, and the persistency with which she avoided him, not only gave zest to his pursuit but rendered her in his eyes a superior being. Had she succumbed like the rest she would have sunk to their level. It was her fidelity to herself that exalted her.

As he still hesitated between returning home and going into the school to bring the matter to a crisis there and then, he tried to imagine what he would do in case of her final and absolute refusal, even after all the concessions and pledges he was prepared to make. He had noted more than once when looking into Hagar's hazel eyes a strange and palpable likeness to that unhappy woman, Hope Vincent, whom he had deserted, and who in turn deserted him, driven to distraction by his domestic chaos. And he now wondered if this gentle creature, who in her gentleness also was like what Hope had once been, could convey such withering scorn and disgust in a look, as characterized the last glance Hope ever bent on him? For that look, as for the woman who gave it, he had thought and cared nothing heretofore, but both haunted him now; and combat the superstition as he would he saw in this an evil omen. At length, impatient and wavering, he obeyed his strongest impulse, entered, dismissed the school and remained alone with her.

Hagar, who had put on her bonnet and cloak before the last of the scholars had departed, lingered only to

arrange the books and papers on her desk. She was longing to be gone, and shook with fear.

Langley spoke softly:

"I hope you were not frightened by the incident between Brother Spencer and myself. Did it startle you? I could not brook his presence here with you. I know I was wrong to show my anger to the miserable pauper, but nothing save death can come betwixt you and me! I give you my word, dear Sister, that nothing of the kind shall happen again, in your presence."

Hagar was terrified.

She felt insecure in the presence of this giant whom she could not help regarding as a low and common man, and was trying to frame an evasive answer to escape an interview she had long been dreading. What could she say?...She had received, the day previous, a note from Brigham Young's Secretary inviting her on behalf of the President to attend a family party at the "Lion House" this very evening, and she had promised some of the President's daughters that she would come soon after school was dismissed to take supper with them and direct a final rehearsal of their music before the party began. Here, she thought, was a means of raising the seige.

"I take little interest in men's quarrels," she said, hurriedly closing her desk, and going to the stove on the pretence of making all secure, "except to wonder why they are not always settled without resorting to blows. You must excuse me Bishop Langley; I have promised to go early to the Lion House to rehearse music for the party to-night. Are there any directions you wished to give me?"

"Only a minute, Sister, only a minute," he urged. "I am not here to direct, but to plead—"

She interrupted him:

"I beg you not to return to that subject. I must go—I cannot hear you."

He stood between her and the door, without any thought of using force to prevent her exit, but still determined that she should remain and hear him.

"Stay one moment, I entreat you!" he exclaimed.

She paused involuntarily, impressed by his singular humility. "You see before you a miserable, dejected wretch, who loves you, worships you!"

She tried to pass him, saying impatiently:

"Bishop Langley, this is wrong. Let me pass; you are too brave a man to insult a helpless woman."

"Too brave? Yes, and for the first time brave enough to love one. You were not safer at your mother's breast than here with me. Even if you reject me, scorn me, denounce me, I swear before Heaven not to come nearer than I now stand, and to let you pass freely when you have heard my story."

"But, if I will not?"

"In pity, you cannot refuse."

"It will be useless. I can never love you."

"You love another, then! the President, eh?"

"What folly! No; a thousand times, no."

"You would not love or marry a polygamist?"

"Never!"

"You do not love this Spencer?"

"Bishop Langley, do you know what you are saying?'

"Full well," he replied, trying to restrain his eagerness, which was being wrought up by his emotions.

"You love him, then; he, this pauper stripling, is my rival!"

"You are wrong, I say; I love no man on earth!"

"Well then, your heart is free. Bestow it on him who will prize it most. The ideal husband is a being who can neither deceive nor suffer deception; an ideal wife the same, and such a state can only be attained by those who truly love. But what is love? It is sacrifice. You taught me the lesson. For you I am prepared to sacrifice everything on earth!...."

"No, no, Bishop Langley; what you say is all in vain. You have heard me, my answer will forever be the same; I cannot love you. Therefore desist, and let me pass!"

"Stay,—stay," he said, detaining her. "You are more stubborn than destiny. But love will pierce bronze or adamant, itself; mine shall pierce you. Listen!" He leant towards her as he spoke, making minute gestures with one hand upon the other. Hagar paused and regarded him with pity.

"This cankered life I have led had almost blasted my soul when God sent an angel to redeem me. I have made a fortune but have no one to share it with me. I

am a lonely beggar doomed to life-long misery unless the angel reaches her hand to save me. My life is a farce. It is because I have cared for nobody, have loved nothing, that such an existence has been tolerable thus long. I loathe it now because I have seen you, because I worship you. No; do not speak, do not ask to leave me until you hear what I will do. I have done wrong, gone astray, shown myself a villain; but I shall be a different man hereafter, I am prepared to relinquish, to abandon everything that connects me with this loathsome life!"

"Abandon the wives and children you are bound to provide for and protect!" exclaimed Hagar, raising her hands in amazement.

"Why not? The law and my conscience approve. I shall not leave them destitute—no, I can leave them all rich, and have a fortune still for you. The property I own here will in a few years be worth a thousand dollars where it is now worth one. They will have more if I go than if I stay. See, then, it is not only to accept the man that loves you and can give you everything the world covets, it is to save him and them. When I wooed you as a Mormon I loved you, but you were not then what you are now, in my sight. I have suffered, I call God to witness, as few men suffer in this world, and have thought in bitter agony many a time that a door of escape might at length be opened to me. You have the power to open such a door. Have you not the will to save me? Look! you shall return to your friends and tell them of my words; ask the advice of your parents, your former pastor or priest, of anybody in whom you have confidence. I will come to you soon, when I have arranged all here. But I am lost if you fail me—Oh! say that you pity me, say that you will save me!"

The Bishop paused, bowing his head on his breast. His passionate appeal had only served to deepen Hagar's abhorence of him. She wondered if he had not made those protestations in suing for Amelia's hand: she thought of his broken vow to his first wife, and her unpitied wretchedness. Her interest in the situation was mingled with a sense of keen alarm. She saw that he determined to have an answer, yet she dared not make the one she wished to give. At length she spoke.

"You must give me time to consider—you shall send

me to my friends as you suggest, and I will consult with them, and follow their advice."

"There is hollowness and deception in what you say!" he exclaimed. "You mean to elude me, to betray me. But, no matter! You have heard me—you know I have spoken the truth—I now leave you to decide as you will. But remember, I have not told you a tithe of my love; I have not hinted at the consuming passion you have kindled in my heart. My fate is in your hands; I must abide your pleasure, even though it be my damnation!..."

"May I pass, then?" asked Hagar, eagerly.

"Yes, I have detained you too long," said the Bishop, humbly stepping aside.

Hagar felt a sudden tremor as she flitted by him and out into the wintry air. She drew her cloak about her and walked on rapidly in the direction of the Lion House. She lacked the courage to go to Sister Eliza's to make any preparations for the party at the President's. On two points she was fully determined: Never to return to Bishop Langley's house; and not to be seen that evening except by the daughters of the President with whom she had promised to rehearse their music.

Several minutes elapsed after her exit before the Bishop moved. The words he had spoken now began to seem like tangible things, and to grate upon his brain as he recalled them. The incandescent stream of his fervor began to resolve itself into cold crystals, whose rough edges scratched his tongue.

Perhaps, after all, he was laboring under a delusion, for was it possible such flaming protestations could be so rife and willing at one moment and thus lagging and stubborn the next? He had given her leave to betray him if she pleased, but there was now about the thought that she might do so the same nakedness and inquietude as characterised the rest of the interview in retrospect. Unable to resist the current of his emotions, anticipation had charmed him onward to the scene he had just enacted; the moments of its duration had thrilled him with a hitherto unknown and undefined sensation, akin to that experienced by one who has staked his all on a die's cast: but the sequel was unutterably bitter. He knew that he had lost, yet

like the gambler, clung to the hope that he should still win.

Meanwhile the pretty widow must be forestalled at the President's. Her unsupported denuncition would he thought, count for little against his record and direct denial. Indeed he felt no doubt of his ability to ridicule her into silence. But that was not all he desired. He had meant all he had said to her, and if she chose to slight his magnificent offer, he must seek to be avenged. He had his doubts about the practicability of coercion in her case, but knew that the President was an adept at persuasion, and thought he might count upon his help. He would, therefore, drive round and have another chat with him.

It was nearly five o'clock, and the mountains were growing dark in the early dusk of winter, when he drove up to the President's gate. Having hitched his horse to the long chain that ran through a line of posts at the curb-stone, he passed through the narrow gate in the high wall, asking the elder in the guard-room if Brother Brigham was in his office.

"Yes, he is there waiting for you," replied the tall, lean elder, with a cork leg, who was at that time the watch-dog of the palace.

"Waiting for me?" asked the Bishop in surprise.

"Yes, sir,—he sent for you half an hour ago."

"Then I must have crossed the messenger on my way," replied the Bishop, feeling a slight uneasiness as he went in.

He found the President alone. He was seated near a table reading, habited, as usual, in a loose-fitting black coat, a colored handkerchief about his neck, spectacles on nose, and on his head rather a broad-brimmed hat lined with green on the nether side of the rim.

"Well, Brother Edwin," said the President, familiarly, "You are prompt enough at obeying a summons, though sometimes slow about coming of your own accord."

"Perhaps so, Brother Brigham," Langley replied, as he shook hands and took a chair, "but this time I am here of my own accord, for your messenger has not seen me—I only heard of him at your gate. Anything special?" He judged by the President's manner that he

had not been sent for from any unfriendly motive, and felt easier as he asked this question, quickly followed by:

"Any new development along the Hot Spring road?"

"No, we won't say anything about that at present. I wanted to have a word about this pretty widow, Sister Miles. It's time she was married." This last remark was uttered with that superb complacency of which the Mormon President was so complete a master. Langley was amazed.

"You think so?" he asked, dubiously.

"I am sure of it. You have had a fair chance, but she don't want you;" Langley started, and gazed strangely at the President, who went on—"So I've selected a husband for her—" Langley interrupted him.

"Yourself, I suppose?" He did not succeed in wholly concealing the sneer.

"You guess badly to-day, Brother Edwin. No. Though you have taken a wife later by some months than I, you want her and I don't. I mean Brother Spencer." His affected urbanity was sufficiently irritating to have caused the Bishop to insult, if not to strike, a lesser personage. But he controled his anger, and said with a forced smile:

"You seem to know all about my wants and the vanity of them, Brother Brigham. May I ask who has been informing you?"

"Herself. She seems to be a straightforward young woman, and had the good sense to come straight to headquarters with her grievance. She left me a few minutes before you came in."

"What did she say?" asked Langley, with obvious difficulty.

"In effect, that she could not remain any longer at your house and would never consent to marry you. She's about the smartest young woman I know of. She's pretty, too, and must have come from well-to-do and educated people. We must go slow with her—especially you, Brother Edwin; she's not the kind to be fooled with. I've agreed to give her a temporary home, and if she won't have Brother Spencer, why I can't say at present what I will do."

"Brother Brigham—you must excuse me—" said Langley rising, but striving to suppress his agitation, "I

have listened as long as I can to this talk—every word of it is cutting me like a knife. To you I know its a light matter—a good joke—but you see, it's no joke to me, for I love that woman; and what's more, I mean to have her, or no man shall on this earth!" He raised his clenched fist, his eyes flashed, and his voice trembled with rage. "Do you prefer to please Spencer rather than me? Can you so love one on the brink of apostacy, and will she take him at your request?"—he gave the rein to his feelings.

By this time the President had taken off his spectacles, and was leaning back in his chair regarding the agitated Bishop with an expression of blank astonishment.

"Sit down, Brother Edwin," he presently said, composedly. "You are getting excited. Sit down. I quite forgot I had not heard your side of the story."

This remark had a soothing effect upon the Bishop's nerves, and he resumed his chair with a much calmer aspect.

"You asked me so many questions at once," continued the President, "I have forgotten them all. Suppose you begin again."

"The whole matter is summed up in a few words. I don't want to offend you, Brother Brigham, as you know well enough; but I love this woman and shall not submit to any arrangement that deprives me of her. Of course, so far you can decide between Spencer and me. But whoever my rival may be, he must reckon with me when all is said and done by other parties. As to my side of the case, it is simply this: I have told this woman I love her and want to marry her. She has refused, and comes to you to repeat her rejection of me; to emphasize it, in short; her coming to you thus places her much at your discretion: with your aid I believe I can obtain her consent. If you fail me,—well I'm pretty used to paddle my own canoe, and——"

"There, there, Edwin," said the President, interrupting in a persuasive tone. "Don't stir up strife. I'll look into this matter. I don't care to bring authority to bear too heavily on Sister Miles even to favor you; but if you are so terribly in love, I presume I'll have to think it over. We may, however, have a reckoning of a new kind if we carry authority too far with her, for its cer-

tain she comes of good stock, and her folks may have influence."

"If that is all, Spencer can tell you who they are," the Bishop replied.

"Have you mentioned it to to him?"

"Yes, soon after her arrival, but he put me off. I believe he has been in love with her all along."

"If he is at his desk ask him to step here a moment."

Bishop Langley obeyed promptly. He found Spencer busy at his desk in the inner office. They returned together.

"We are holding a conference on the subject of Sister Miles, and want your help, brother Charles," said President Young. "Can you throw any light on her pedigree, and inform us whether she has any uncles in the Senate, or cousins in the House? in short who and what her relations may be? If I remember rightly, you said her father was one of the devil's Ministers?"

"He was a parson of the Unitarian persuasion. But she was only his adopted daughter. I believe she was an orphan, I am not sure."

"What name, and how much of a following?" asked the President.

"He was called Dr. Taine—" at this name Langley started—"and to judge by his church—his home and so forth, for I never attended his service," continued the Elder, not noticing Langley, "I should say he must have a rich and numerous following."

"She was called, Miss Taine then, when you first saw her? What was her given name? I have never heard it," asked the President with unconcealed curiosity.

"I have promised her that I would not mention that," said Spencer.

"No matter, I must hear it. Come, out with it."

Spencer paused a moment, the impulse to rebel against the autocrat rising like a torrent in his heart. He forced it back and answered:

"Her name is Hagar."

Langley's cheek, already blanched, grew deadly pale. He repeated the name in a whisper as he averted his face to conceal for a moment his intense agony. He wheeled about suddenly to clutch at the last straw of hope, both of his companions supposing that the frenzy of his passion was the cause of his strange look.

"When and where did she marry the young officer named Miles?" he asked, grimly.

"Must I answer?" asked Spencer, addressing Brigham Young.

"Yes. Let's have the whole story."

"Well, then, she was never married to such a man. She eloped with a southern spy named Lamont alias Smiles, and the child she buried on the plains was his—"

At this moment Langley, who had been pierced as by a dagger at the sound of her name, sunk upon the floor, crying out in a faint voice.

"Oh! my God!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Nothing would content them but that every end for which civil society exists should be sacrificed to the ascendancy of a theological system,"
—*Macaulay.*

Hagar continued to reside in the family of the President during the rest of the winter, and was at a loss to account for the sudden cessation of the Bishop's suit, and the state of absolute tranquility in which she found herself from the very day of her arrival under the prophet's roof. She thought it likely that Brigham Young had interposed in her behalf, and felt very grateful to him for the peace she now enjoyed.

Bishop Langley kept his secret, and neither the President nor Spencer could ascribe a cause for his breaking down as he did. It was thought by many, that Langley's infatuation for the girl had unsettled his reason. Since his interview with Brigham Young he had remained almost constantly at home in a state which cast a gloom over his household, and called forth many characteristic comments from the neighbors. Some averred that Sister Miles was a witch who ought to be burnt for the public safety; others held that she must be an evil spirit whom Satan had sent to tempt the leading lights of Zion and "bedevil their wits," as an old crone, who noted the change in the Bishop, put it. It was well for her that her limited ability in music and "reading and writing" had obtained for her a place of safety, for she would not have been free from serious danger in a more exposed position. She worked on cheerfully and patiently, giving good value for all she received, and longing for the time when she might be able to return to the East. That hope, though not a strong one, still sustained and gave her courage.

"Well, well," said Brigham Young to Spencer a day or two after Langley's painful exhibition, "I have known of the finest horse in a band being driven to death by a gad-fly; but I never expected to see one of the most level headed men in the church driven mad by a butterfly."

Spencer had been called into the sanctum to take down in short-hand some official letters the prophet wished to dictate, and merely said:

"It was very strange: I fear Bishop Langley was not well."

"Perhaps not. Some are sick in body, some in their minds, and still others in their souls, and it often happens that they are sick all through: such, for instance, is the condition of the apostate. He is a rotten carcass without any soul in him, fit only to be thrown out for dogs to gnaw at."

The young man felt the force of this fling keenly enough, and fully realized that there was something back of it. For a second his face blanched slightly and he hung his head, but almost instantly his heart came back and he experienced a vague, undefined satisfaction in guessing the prophet's purpose. The passing sense of fear gave place to calm defiance.

"The man, or woman, who will apostatize from the House of Israel is thereby blotted out from the Book of Life, and shall exist no more forever. The curse shall follow him all the days of his miserable existence, and when he sinks into his grave he shall pass to everlasting darkness and everlasting death."

Spencer deliberately set down this soliloquy, and then rehearsed the alphabet of Pitman's system in sheer abstraction.

"Lay down that pencil and listen to me." There was a tone and manner of absolute authority about the Mormon President which had cowed and coerced many a stronger and older man than Spencer.

"I have obeyed, sir, and am at your service."

"That's right. Now, Brother Charles, I'm going to give you some good advice. You have spent the greater part of your life about this office and I have known you from your cradle. Now, I hear, and have good reason to believe, that you are acting strangely of late. You fancy that you're so smart you can just scuttle out and shift for yourself. I don't know what you intend, but I can tell you what you'll do—you'll come to grief. Your father and mother are alarmed about you. You want an anchor; you ought to marry and settle down—you're earning twice as much as I was when I married my first

wife. But I expect you are touched also by the butterfly madness; you forget that she not only walked but ran into the spider's parlor, and that your sighs can never penetrate the walls of the Lion House. And yet, you might become my son-in-law,—who knows? The devil has been paying off his debt to me in this article, and, he may yet add you, with all your cleverness, to the list. Sister Miles is not the kind for a two-room cottage and third pick of Tithing office stores. If you want her you'll have to get as rich as Brother Edwin. She will never marry anything short of a rich bishop, unless she takes it into her head to run off with a stage-driver, and she seems too serious for that. But I have my eye on her, and you know what that means."

"What does it mean? That you will marry her?"

"Well, Brother Charles, how does that strike you? How would such an event appear to eyes growing green with the venom of apostacy? Aha! you see I've found you out! And now I'm going to make short work of you."

The gong rang out shrilly and the Kanaka appeared instantly at the side door.

"I ought to send you to a dungeon for repentance; but I'm going to deal kindly with you. You can wait, George, and listen to all that's said."

Spencer sprang to his feet when the Kanaka entered, but he resumed his chair and bent his steady gaze upon the President.

"How many other young fools, male and female, have taken like you the path that leads straight to the devil across lots?"

"President Young," said Spencer calmly, "I do not understand you."

"How many others are going to the medicine man of the 19th Ward for comfort and advice?"

"I know nothing about what others do or where they go. As for myself, I have made no secret of my visits to Dr. Robinson. I have gone there in broad daylight. He was my intimate friend before he left the church. We met soon after my return last fall, and I am free to confess that, in spite of his apostacy which I deplored and resented at the time it occurred, I have relaxed the bitterness I felt towards him, and respect him as an honest man. He works hard and does much good amongst

the poor. He devotes himself like a true man to his wife and pretty children, and meddles with nobody. Therefore, I see no good reason why I, his old friend, should either despise or ignore him."

"Most sweet, young man! Do you not know that the Latter-Day Saint who can so sweetly relax his bitterness towards the deadly enemies of Israel, is only fit to be classed with them? I like your candor: Better than anything else could, it shows me that the devil has begun to fasten his net about you, and unless we can save you by radical measures you are doomed to damnation. Do not 'relax' your candor till you have answered briefly a few questions I shall ask you. I have noticed your budding apathy; the bloom of which is always apostacy. So far it is not of the vicious type. It is a restless uncertainty rather than a fixed purpose. You are afflicted with three complaints: You are in love with Sister Miles, that's one; you think yourself fearfully smart, that's two; and you think the priesthood a parcel of old fools, that's three——"

"I may be eaten up with my own conceit—as to that I am, perhaps, not able to judge; but the last malady I deny. I have never by word or act shown the slightest disrespect for the priesthood."

"Then the possession of Sister Miles would be a balm for all your woes?"

"I decline to answer. I have never spoken to the lady on the subject of love. But, whatever my thoughts may be I hold them sacred to myself."

"She cares nothing about the Church; you brought her here unconverted, and she awaits only the opportunity to shake the dust of Zion from her feet. Shall you follow her to hell when she departs?"

"I apprehend that her course will lie towards a very different haven. But as to my following her:—Who can tell what he may do in the mysterious future?"

"Have you talked on this subject with your friend the pill-maker?"

"If you mean Dr. Robinson I should like to assure you once for all, that he is in no wise to blame for what you find objectionable in me or in my conduct. He never sought me—I forced myself upon him. Whatever

I confided to him of my thoughts or intentions I did against his expressed objection. His only advice to me was to be faithful to my convictions—'"

"Yes, when he saw they were bearing you in his direction! Did you not say at his door the other night, 'The President and priesthood fatten while the people starve'?"

"I did not."

"Did you not say, 'Zion and hell have become synonymous?'"

"I did not."

"Well, then, the voice was his, and it was by such phrases that he sought to keep you 'true to your convictions,' it was by these noble sentiments that your 'bitterness became relaxed.'"

"President Young," said Spencer, rising and looking steadily into the prophet's spectacles, "you have been deceived. Whoever told you that such words were spoken by me or in my presence, lies. As for Dr. Robinson, I have only heard kind words from him about yourself and the church in general. He wants to live at peace here, and seeks to avoid those themes that create ill-feeling. If you will let me confront the false witness who has reported these things I will make him confess his shame."

"Be calm, Brother Charles, your defence cannot save an apostate from hell-fire. You'd better attend to your own case, and leave the pill-maker to the wrath of the Lord."

"Left to that I should have no fear about his safety. It is the spite and malice of men who bear false-witness and strike in the dark; against these he muit be warned."

"And you will bear the warning?"

"Perhaps——"

Spencer paused. A dreadful apprehension smote him like a sudden blow.

"Young man, you are a fool! If you do not mind you will follow the will-o'the wisp into the pit of destruction. Leave idle romancing and consider your substantial advantages; you shall have the woman and continue in the path of promotion in the priesthood, or you shall be cast out, and left to the buffetings of

Satan. It is not my custom to bargain with erring servants of the Lord, but you have given such good promise in the cause of the Gospel, that I offer you these alternatives in the hope that you will choose wisely for yourself. On the one hand lie, prosperity, influence, and authority here, and exceeding great glory in the world to come. On the other, is the desert of the Gentiles, where the Lord is not known, and the vengeance that pursues the steps of the apostate. Choose for yourself."

"You will allow me time to consider?"

"If you need time for that, my lad, you are lost. If you are not for us, you are against us. Answer instantly."

"It is a bargain, you say. But you offer a condition you could not fulfill."

"You mean to belittle my authority? It is plain I have done too much—that I have trusted you too far. But no matter. Your conduct now shall be your answer; and, when next you come to me, come on your knees!"

The Mormon President rose with dignity and passed in front of Spencer to the outer office. The Kanaka stood still at his post, and the young man sat for a time absorbed in thought. Presently he returned to his place in the other office and was surprised to find a slip of paper lying on his desk with the word 'Vacant' written in large letters. The deformed man who was at the head of the office looked at him askance but said nothing. The other clerks were extraordinarily busy and paid no attention to his movements as he got his hat and coat and prepared to withdraw. Their friend had suddenly become a leper whose hand they dared not touch.

A week passed. Spencer's father labored with him and made daily reports to the President, but the young saint failed to appear either in the attitude of a suppliant, or otherwise. He stayed constantly at home and confined himself to his own room most of the time. A report became current that he was very sick with a fever, and one morning a note came to his mother from Dr. Robinson asking in the kindest and gentlest manner if he might not be allowed to call and see if he

could do anything for 'Charley,' who had been his friend since childhood. The good woman religiously burnt the letter, and sent a brief reply to the effect that he had already poisoned her poor boy's mind deeply enough, she did not wish him to poison his body as well.

The Elders who came to reason and pray with the young man did not realize that they had a case of typhoid, as well as the subtle symptoms of apostacy to deal with. They told him he had a devil that was causing all the difficulty, and that could only be cast out when he should resume his obedience to the priesthood.

When a Mormon doctor was finally called in, the disease had fastened itself firmly upon him. The house was unsanitary. Some of the younger children had died of scarlet fever in the fall, and Spencer's system was terribly run down by the exposure and privation encounterd during his mission, so that he was a ready victim. The physician said at once that his condition was alarming, and advised his mother to have him taken care of day and night.

The news of Spencer's dismissal had spread rapidly throughout Zion. Hagar had heard of it in the Lion House. But she was much more troubled when a report reached her that he was attacked by that dreadful malady from which, she heard, few were ever saved there.

A sudden sense of peril seized her.

"Why," she cried, "if he should die nobody will know me here. I shall be lost! No—he must not die—he must not die!"

She hurried to the apartment of Sister Clara, the kind and gentle wife of the prophet with whom she was domiciled, and asked her permission to go to Spencer's house to inquire about her friend. The good lady warned her of the danger and said that she could not allow one of her daughters to go with her.

It was not far to the Spencer's house, and though Hagar felt some uneasiness lest she might meet Langley on the way, she reached there in safety and was gratefully welcomed by the elder Mrs. Spencer.

"It may be the Lord's will to take him away rather than to let him fall into apostacy. And, although it

would break my heart to lose my poor boy, what can I say or do in opposition to God's wisdom? Even for myself I would rather bury him than see him an apostate."

Hagar was amazed at this cold relentless fanaticism, but passed it without comment and begged to see the sick man. Mrs. Spencer, as a matter of fact, preferred that she should not be admitted on account of the spiritual injury she might impart, but she sought to turn her from her purpose on the ground of the danger to herself.

"I am accustomed to nursing the sick, and have no fear for myself. Mr. Spencer saved my life once, and I must see him. Please take me to his room."

Hagar knew the house from her former stay there and started up the stairs. Mrs. Spencer's objections were nullified by the young woman's ardor. There was but one short and narrow flight of steps. At the landing Hagar was met by the second Mrs. Spencer and was presently admitted to the sick room. The young missionary was so greatly changed that she could scarcely recognize him. He smiled and extended his hand and as Hagar took it she fell on her knees at the bedside, buried her face in her hands, and sobbed as if her heart was breaking.

They were alone. The womanly instinct even of those partners in grief, told them that here was a scene in which they could play no part.

"I dread her influence, Amanda," said the first Mrs. Spencer, shaking her head sadly.

"Well, to me she seems like an angel; but, if she's a devil, why does the Lord let her come?"

Hagar's cry was one to heaven for the life of him she now realized for the first time, she loved. And the answer came back with healing to her eyes and to her heart. In a few moments she was all smiles and hope.

Spencer felt the glow of her spiritual presence which brought the place a new and effulgent light, filled the air with sweetness and peace, and transformed the shabby low-ceiled room into a corner of paradise. If life itself had been the price of this hour he would have paid it.

Days and weeks flew by. Hagar watched him through the crisis and by intelligent attention to ventilation

and other sanitary requirements, did yeoman's service in tiding him over the crucial hour. During his convalescence she prepared his food with her own hands, and while giving rigid attention to her duties at the President's spent a portion of each day in his company.

In the knowledge of his love Hagar was brave and happy. She looked forward to the day when they should be able to go back to the States together and live and work for each other. That was all she asked, and Spencer promised her that it should certainly be if she would wait patiently awhile.

As soon as he was strong enough to get about he began looking for employment, and, after meeting with rebuffs from some of the leading Saints, determined to apply to the Waller Brothers, a mercantile firm whose members had left the Church after a bitter quarrel with the authorities over a demand for tithing. They were in need of a book-keeper and correspondent and offered him immediate employment on a good salary.

His real trouble now began. His poor old mother was in despair over the prospect of his working for and with those vile apostates who were under the ban of the priesthood. All saints were cautioned not to deal at their store and they were regarded as a blot upon the fair face of Zion. Now her dear boy was going to be their servant and receive his hire from them. The ardent and successful young missionary, whose praises had been sung from the Endowment House to the remotest "Stake" of Zion, and whose steps were leading fairly on the road to an apostleship, had cast aside the glory and exaltation of the priesthood to become the hireling of an apostate. Such were the bitter reflections of the poor old mother who loved him tenderly, but whose deepest affection was for her Church. As he turned to go, she sat down and wept, saying:

"Ah! Charles, my poor boy, may the Lord pity you!"

"And may he bless and protect you, dear mother. I look to him as you do, and I know he would not have me play the hypocrite."

He had already told her that the Waller Brothers were going to pay him twice as much as he had received from the Church and she regarded this as another trick of Satan. But this was not all; he could no

longer lodge under the roof-tree of the saintly home. He must seek a home elsewhere, since even a mother must not shelter her child after he become tainted with the spirit of apostacy. After a touching scene with the poor mother, whose fanaticism had to some degree unsettled her reason, he went forth in search of a temporary stopping place, and began his duties at the Waller Brothers store. His father denounced him as if he had been an outlaw and threatened to disown him. But the young man only bowed his head and walked away in silence.

The very next day while he was being instructed by his employer, he was astonished to see Hagar come into the store. She glanced about anxiously, and had a sad expression on her face. Charles excused himself and went to her.

"Why, Hagar darling, what has happened?"

"Is my face such a tell-tale, then? I am almost ashamed to let you know it—I have been told to leave President Young's house." Her lip quivered, but she kept back her tears and resolutely maintained her composure.

"You have? By whom?" asked Spencer leading her to the inner office.

"By Sister Clara, in obedience to orders from the President. She was so sorry about it, and cried as if she were driving out one of her own children. She said: 'I have no choice but implicit obedience. I attempted to tell Brother Brigham that you were here among strangers, far from your home, and that you would be forever grateful for the kindness shown you. I told him that gratitude of a gentle soul is like a benediction from heaven. But you must go. He thinks you are the cause of Charles Spencer's apostacy.'"

"Narrow bigot! But no matter, you can find a home at Doctor Robinson's."

"Yes, I thought of that. Mrs. Robinson has often told me that I would be welcome. But they said at President Young's that you did wrong to go to the Doctor's house, and that nobody who valued the good opinion of those in authority would dare associate with the apostate. I do not ask you to give up your religion on my account. I know that here or elsewhere you will never dishonor me or yourself, and I am willing to live

wherever your wishes and interests direct. Do you not think it would be better if I could get board in a Mormon family?"

"You will be more comfortable and happy with Mrs. Robinson. She has never been a Mormon herself, and they cannot object to her giving you shelter. Your tastes and sympathies are congenial, and, since we must remain here for the present, I think that will be the best place for you. In spite of personal ties and a lingering affection for the cause in which I have labored honestly, I am resolved to quit Utah. My life would be a sorry failure here, for I am branded now with what is equivalent to the curse of Cain, in the eyes of all my friends."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Hagar's removal from the harem of the Mormon dictator to the cottage of Dr. Robinson was quietly effected. It would be difficult to say whither her late host had expected her to go, but he was very angry when word was brought that she had taken refuge with that "miserable apostate." He heard that all the other apostates, and all the Gentiles and outsiders who were wintering within the walls of Zion, were chuckling triumphantly over the circumstance, and reports of the actual language used by some of these scoffing critics reached his ears, borne by sycophantic gossips who had no talent except their tattling malice. It fell out that the Prophet waxed exceeding wroth over this matter and employed some decidedly strong language in the way of prophesying the summary vengeance the Lord was about to wreak upon all his enemies. He and other magnates of the Church invoked an early and terrible visitation of the Divine rage, not only in private confab, but from the rostrum of the Tabernacle.

Charles Spencer was only too well aware that he was to blame for this agitated state of the Apostolic mind. The effect of his example was dreaded. He knew that disaffection was terribly contagious, and took care not to discuss his views with any of his former friends and colleagues, though they often came to him for that purpose. He did not suspect that any of these came as spies, but such was the case, and the trouble they took to draw him out might have warned him of the truth. His apostacy was now as much the theme among the saints as his missionary achievements had been a few short months before. Many spoke with pity or commiseration, but others discussed him with hatred and malice, the birth of envy or fanaticism. The Saint who had been most industrious in spying out his relations with Dr. Robinson was now installed in his former post at the tithing office. Many of the boys and girls who had been his school-mates, and even the people he had

converted during his labors amongst the heathen of Ohio, passed him on the street without recognition.

But he had reached that point where he could feel sorrow for these offenders more keenly than the wrong to himself; and, after all, he sometimes thought, human nature was the same in Zion as elsewhere. He had seen the members of different sects treat each other exactly as the Mormons treated Gentiles, and heard them denounce infidels or free thinkers just as the Mormons did apostates.

The steady ray of hope and confidence which dwelt in his fine dark eyes was the outward expression of the fervent heart-prayer—the ever-burning altar-lamp of his soul. He was cheerful. The mutterings of fanatics and hypocrites disturbed him not. The United States troops on the hill above the town were a safe-guard against any high-handed act of tyranny that could injure him or the one he loved more dearly, and he believed that God would save him from the assassin, who had already done much bloody work in Zion. The snow was beginning to disappear from the valleys, and the time was fast approaching when he and his betrothed might exchange the narrowness of the Mormon Kingdom for a free place in the broad world.

"It was a sad day for the Mormon people when they allowed themselves to be fettered by polygamy," he said one day when musing with tender regret on the prospect of severing himself from his people.

"The glory of having settled a wilderness and established therein a thrifty population is overshadowed by the approved crime they have planted with it. And this terrible mistake will work irreparable harm before it can be corrected. Used as the thumb-screw of the priesthood, it is the ball and chain of Satan by which progress is clogged, hope delayed, growth retarded, and disgrace made manifest. Always a failure and a curse, it cannot be perpetuated here. The worst evil will be that the generation of men and women who spring from polygmous stock, will supply a mass of blind advocates of the system, who will naturally think it must be good since it has produced them. Were it not for this source of life, of which it cannot now be deprived, it would soon die out and leave the people to accom-

plish their destiny with their natural pluck and enterprise untrammeled. But still, as God has suffered it, there must have been a cause, and it will take a far-seeing prophet to predict the outcome."

After long days of uncongenial labor at the store, labor which he performed cheerfully only because he knew it was but a temporary expedient, his evenings were usually passed at Dr. Robinson's, where they read, conversed, or listened to Hagar's music, and singing by the doctor's wife.

It was a bleak night in March. The afternoon had been so cold and stormy that nothing was doing at the store, and the Waller Brothers put up their shutters at sundown. Spencer went early to the Doctor's house where he and Hagar talked over their plans until supper was announced. Then the regular programme followed. There was much sickness in the town and Dr. Robinson was called to see a child across the way. They had been reading Scott's Quentin Durward, and the Doctor laid the book aside in the middle of a chapter to go at once, though the patient was the child of a poor Mormon, who could pay him nothing. When he returned and resumed the story, Hagar said:—

"If Sir Walter Scott had been acquainted with Brigham Young I should think he drew the character of Louis XIth, from him."

Spencer and the Doctor laughed.

"Are you not a little severe, Miss Taine?" said the Doctor.

"There certainly is a strong resemblance in some particulars, but Brigham is a more kindly man. He is crafty, rugged, and tyrannical, but I should be sorry to think him quite the counterpart of grim old Louis."

The reading was continued until nearly midnight so interested had they become in the romance. Then Spencer withdrew. Hagar went with him to the door where they parted with kisses and blessings, never to meet again in peace and joy under that hospitable roof. It was a night for assassins to ply their trade in safety. The inky blackness blended earth and sky into a barrier as dense as that which stands beyond the portals of death. It was a few seconds before Spencer could find

his way to the gate that shut in the small door-yard from the side-walk; but after his eyes became a little accustomed to the heavy gloom, the dim outlines of trees and fences enabled him to proceed, and he disappeared in the darkness.

At two o'clock there was a gentle knock at Dr. Robinson's door. The Danish servant girl who had her room down stairs heard the noise and opened the window to ask who was there. A small boy with a lantern, who was shivering with the cold, stammered out:

"My sister is dying, and mother wants to know if the Doctor will please come to her."

"Who are you? be you Johnny Reed?"

"Yes, and won't you ask him to come quick?"

The girl assured him that the Doctor would soon be there, and the boy trotted away, the wind whistling through his scanty raiment.

Dr. Robinson had heard the boy's voice and got up at once. He had already done his best to save the sick child, but it was one of those frail creatures not made to live, and he knew the previous day that the end was near. Still to comfort the poor widowed mother in her sorrow he made haste to get ready. His wife warned him to be careful of his own health, and insisted on placing a heavy muffler around his neck before she would let him go. As was his habit on leaving the house at night, he leant over and kissed her fondly, then went to the trundle-bed where his little boy and girl slept peacefully, to kiss their angel foreheads. He seemed to linger more than usual to-night, and his wife, noticing it, said softly:

"Don't wake them, dear."

Coming back to the bedside the Doctor replied:

"No, they are sleeping soundly. I was only making the covers snug around them, and thinking how heaven has blessed us." There was a pathetic note in his voice that she never forgot.

The boy had gone home with his lantern, and as the Doctor opened the door the darkness seemed like an impassable barrier. He felt his way slowly to the gate, his foot-fall on the black frozen ground making a hollow ringing noise. Not a star was in sight, and the weird whistling of the wind made a sinister accompaniment to the night-gloom.

What means that sudden motion of feet just outside the gate! A crushing blow on a man's head, a thrust with a sharp dagger, a faint moan, a gurgling sound, the stealthy fall of receding footsteps,—and then a deadly calm, broken only by the sighing wind.....!

* * * * * * * * *

Spencer had reached his boarding house in safety, but instead of retiring, sat down moodily and was soon lost in reflection. For some unknown reason he felt ill at ease, and haunted by a vague sense of danger. It was a strange and uncomfortable state of mind such as he had never before experienced, and he tried in vain to convince himself that it did not forbode evil. Involuntarily he laid a loaded revolver under the pillow on his bed where he could reach it readily in case of need, and then continued to brood and worry over his unwonted apprehensions.

For Hagar he was ready to do and dare anything, but suppose the enemy should strike at her! The thought was like to drive him mad. Langley's power and resources he knew to be irresistible but he believed that somehow Providence would shield him and his darling from the craft of the priesthood, and deliver them out of their present situation of danger and doubt.

Growing more calm, at length, he pictured to himself the varied phases of his acquaintance with Hagar. Now as the gentle girl he had saved near Cleveland; again, as the fainting victim of a villain at Castle Adamant; as the working girl plying her needle in a factory, or as the earnest woman he had just left (far more beautiful and attractive than ever, he thought), tried and proved by adversity—tested to the fullest extent in the white heat of affliction and bitter experience. And by some mysterious agency her heart had been given to him at a time when he was looking forward with grim satisfaction to the visit of death. It seemed that by a strange fatality their lives were knit together.

"I wonder what is to be the next act in this drama?" As he spoke he threw himself upon the bed, and burying his face in his hands, wept as only a young and ardent man can weep. In the midst of his sobbing he thought he heard a knock at his chamber door. He listened. The knock was repeated a little louder. The clock had

just struck three. What could mean a visit at that hour? Seizing his revolver he went to the door.

"Who's there?"

"Don't be alarmed, it is I—Langley—I come as a friend."

Spencer's heart stood still. Here, he thought, was the explanation of his fearful apprehensions.

"Langley as a friend! I warn you bishop that I am prepared to sell my life dearly. Begone, or by the Lord I'll kill you."

"I am alone and unarmed, and I swear that I come as your friend, perhaps as the only one who can save you. I bring you terrible news and a warning. Kill me if you will."

At this Spencer threw the door open and stepped back assuming an attitude of defense.

Langley strode in wearing a large cloak, a slouched hat, and top boots, and looking like a bandit chief. It was his usual habit, but Spencer saw at once that he lacked the overbearing and impertinent manner which he generally assumed before those he considered his inferiors.

"You may be sure that no common errand has brought me here at this hour——"

"I am—you have come to murder me—"

"No—you wrong me. As I said before, I come to save you."

"From what—or whom?"

"From a terrible danger. Assassins are abroad, as you shall hear. You may think me their confederate unless you wait to hear me out."

"And who has been assailed?"

Spencer's mind was filled with dreadful images. His eyes glared, and Langley feared from the nervous manner with which he clutched his weapon that he might shoot him the instant he told his story.

"It is not Hagar. She is safe. But it is a damnable piece of business which I deplore as much as you do, and of which I am as innocent. I have never shared the priesthood's ardor for 'blood atonement,' and have never countenanced it by word or deed."

"It is Robinson then—they have murdered him——"

"Be calm one moment. If in your frenzy you should

kill me, you would have on your hands the blood of an innocent man, and bring sudden destruction on yourself and others."

Spencer, livid with a vague horror, sat down. A despairing sigh escaped him as he said.

"Go on."

"Let me tell you first, Charles, that I have the strongest reason for wishing to serve you and the woman you love. The mystery of my conduct when you made known her name, will disappear when I tell you that she is my own daughter."

"What's that you say?" gasped Spencer, looking up suddenly into the Bishop's face. He was so absorbed that he scarcely heard Langley's words. "Your daughter!"

"Yes, my daughter. I will tell you more of this at another time. Now nerve yourself for to-night's tragedy, and resolve at once to be ruled by me, or you will imperil your own life. Half an hour ago I was in my bed fast asleep. I was startled by the raising of a window, and heard a paper parcel fall on the floor. Procuring a light I dressed, armed myself, and then picked up the parcel which contained this letter:

"'Bishop Langley, the prophets are fulfilled. The apostate bites the dust. It is beautiful to see how the Lord works out his decrees. Spencer, jealous of the seductive doctor's attentions to the pretty widow, picks a quarrel with him, and sticks him under the fifth rib. But we won't have these cussed apostates mussing up the streets of Zion with each other's gore. The case against C. S. is perfectly clear, and as soon as the police carry Robinson's carcass away in the morning, a committee of citizens will wait on C. S. and string him up to the nearest telegraph pole.,"

"There is no need of reading more of this. You see the purpose of these cutthroats....."

"Oh! this is too horrible! I could not believe that such demons existed here."

For a time he was entirely overcome. His nerves were still weak from the effects of recent sickness, and the appalling suddenness and atrocity of this crime in which he was marked for a victim, filled him with unutterable grief and dismay.

After a while Langley prevailed on him to come to his house, and as they went along the Bishop tried to draw his thoughts from the tragedy by telling him the story of Hagar.

Leaving Spencer to himself the Bishop roused one of his sons and sent him post haste to Camp Douglas with a message to General Connor. The General and Langley were good friends, and as the message reached the former at daylight, telling him of Robinson's murder and the threats of mob violence to Spencer, he made a point of having a Company of Cavalry in the town by sun-rise. The day passed quietly though the mob gathered at the City Hall and Spencer's name was coupled with the murder.

Hagar, terrified as she was, forgot herself in ministering to the stricken wife and mother. Spencer came early to help and cheer them as best he could.

The civil power was entirely in the hands of the Mormon authorities, and the assassins were never punished. When Langley mentioned the matter to Brigham Young some weeks later the prophet merely said:

"If it is the Lord's will that his enemies are taken off, why let them rest in peace. When the wrath of the saints is kindled against the ungodly, there must be some reason for it, and my idea is to let it work itself out according to the Lord's will. That's always been my doctrine, and it's worked first rate."

Langley took both Hagar and Spencer under his protection and had it clearly understood that they were to be allowed to depart in peace from the Territory. As soon as the roads were open by the southern route, to California, Mrs. Robinson and her children went to her parents at Los Angeles, and a few days later the delayed mails arrived from the East.

The truth about Hagar's identity was kept sacred by her father and Spencer. The ideal affection for her which had taken possession of Langley before he knew who she was, lingered yet in his heart, chastened, and eloquent with good promptings to his mind. In her he saw the innocence and trust as well as the beauty of the Hope Vincent whom he had so cruelly wronged, and he thought he detected also in her features a clear resemblance to himself. He was painfully conscious

that the children of his other wives were not like her in any respect, and felt a singular pride and satisfaction in the reflection that despite all her misfortune and sorrow she was a true woman with courage to die if need be rather than suffer dishonor.

"Poor Hope is gone," he would say to himself when musing as to what course he should pursue, "and I can best atone for my injustice to her by dealing kindly and fairly with her child. Spencer loves her, and nothing could tempt him to give her up. Brigham shall know nothing he does not know already, and she shall be spared any further knowledge about herself. They shall go and settle wherever they like, and I will help them."

Hagar's friendship with Amelia, the Bishop's youngest wife, was renewed, and her last days among the saints were passed in comparative peace and contentment. The Bishop treated her with every mark of respect and consideration, and one day, in Spencer's presence said to her:—

"Though you would not accept me as a lover I shall always love you as if you were my own child; and if ever I can serve you in any way, you have only to command me."

The day after Ben Halliday's stage arrived with the Eastern mail, which had been delayed some time by the impassable snows in the mountains, one of Spencer's employers came into the store with letters and parcels.

"Here is something for you, Spencer," said he, handing him a letter and a small express package.

Spencer was surprised on opening them to find that they were both from James Taine. As soon as he could get away he hurried to Hagar with the good news. First he exhibited a superb gold watch. In looking over his father's papers, James said, he had found a draft of a letter intended for the young hero who saved him from the fire, and fulfilled his wish by forwarding the small memento of his admiration and esteem. The letter also contained an account of the writer being severely wounded at Murfreesboro on New Years day; of his promotion to the rank of colonel; his enforced retirement from active service; of Mrs. Taine's death abroad, and his own return to Chestnut Grove where

he expected to pass the rest of his life as an invalid. In closing Col. Taine said:

"In your reply, my dear Spencer, please tell me what was the last you saw and heard of my dear foster-sister? I have no doubt you felt a sympathetic interest in her sad misfortune, and perchance, in your rambling something may have transpired concerning her of a later date than anything we have. All trace of her from the time of Lamont's arrest at Cincinnati is as completely lost as if the waves of the sea had closed over her. And yet I cling to the hope that she still lives, and that I shall sometime find her."

"Dear good brother," exclaimed Hagar. "And to think that he was wounded." She was silent for a moment, and her half restrained emotion brought the tears to Spencer's eyes. It was so sweet to know that loving hearts were beating yet with hope for her, but so bitter to realize how she had wronged the brother who loved her so tenderly.

"To relieve Colonel Taine's suspense dear Hagar, and to cheer him in his sadness, I will telegraph at once that you are here and safe. Have you not some special message you would like to send him?"

"Yes, love; tell him that you are no longer a Mormon who cannot share his friendship; that we shall soon leave Utah, and——"

"I know the rest. Yes, I will go at once so that he may hear before this day passes, that you are safe."

"Wait a moment—let me help you write the dispatch, and we can send it to the office by one of the boys."

The answer which came from Colonel Taine next day was a great surprise to the lovers, and caused Spencer no little uneasiness. In his own dispatch he had modestly abstained from any reference to Hagar's relations to himself, merely stating that she was in Salt Lake City and that he would write full particulars by the first stage. Colonel Taine telegraphed a credit for $500, and directed Spencer to help Hagar in her preparations for the long journey, and have her start for Ohio as soon as the weather was sufficiently settled. He wished her to return to the old home at Chestnut Grove.

"Colonel Taine loved you, Hagar, and I believe he

will want to marry you," said Spencer while they were talking over the dispatch.

Hagar was deeply touched by what she deemed the extraordinary magnanimity of her foster-brother, but said:

"No, James loves me only as a sister. His good heart is ready to forgive me for my shameful act; but it cannot be: I could not go back to Chestnut Grove, nor in any way accept his help."

As soon as Bishop Langley was informed of the communications which had passed between his proteges and Colonel Taine he went to Brigham Young.

"Brother Brigham," he said, "you did well to deal gently with Sister Miles, and there's nothing left for us now but to send her back with good grace to her friends."

"Why so? What has happened, Brother Edwin?" asked the prophet quietly.

Langley told him about the present to Spencer, the money and the dispatches.

"Very well; let them be off at once then. Their presence here is contaminating to the young. I have nothing special against the girl, but that miserable rebel, Spencer, is a stench in my nostrils."

"I admit that it is too bad; but we cannot force them to start before the season is farther advanced and travel becomes more comfortable and safe."

"What do you care for their comfort or safety? I have permitted your interference far enough in this case, but it can go no farther. They must leave here by the first stage or I will not be responsible for the consequences."

"Oh, very well—by the first stage on which they can get a passage;—that will be towards the end of June, an excellent season for travel."

The President did not like Bishop Langley's demeanor but was well-nigh defenceless. Langley's shrewd and self-willed personality was too potent a factor in the affairs of Zion to be ignored; even the President himself had no wish to antagonize him, and ended by telling him to do as he liked. Langley then said:

"Spencer wants to be set right about that bake-kettle incident. He says when he heard it mentioned in

the tabernacle as a miracle, he blushed to the roots of his hair. The delusion was very useful for the purposes of the train, but I think myself that the true explanation might now be given with advantage."

"What next will you wish to do for our fallow Judas, Edwin? You are suddenly become as mild as buttermilk, whereas you were wont to be more like a draught of wormwood. No. It makes no difference how that miracle was performed. It was seen and believed of the people, and has become so deeply rooted in their minds that it would require even a greater miracle to dispel it. When the people believe let them alone. They are as likely to be right in thinking it a thunderbolt from Heaven as you are in imagining that it was an explosive bake-kettle. Leave such quibbles to lawyers, and let the saints have faith."

CHAPTER XXIX.

The day before the stage left which was to carry the young apostate and his Gentile sweetheart beyond the mystic bounderies of the Mormon Kingdom, Spencer sought a final interview with Bishop Langley. Several suspicious circumstances had arisen within the last few days which caused him considerable uneasiness, and there was serious reason for him to fear that he would not be suffered to depart without trouble.

It was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for an apostate to get out of Zion in those days, and Spencer knew it well. He had seen the children throw stones at persons who dared to cast off the Church yoke, and the ghastly story of poor Robinson's fate still recurred to him with sickening vividness. *

"No," said Langley, in reply to his question, "Brigham knows nothing about that or other murders. He might, I believe, discover the assassins if he saw fit, but it is contrary to his policy. He preaches blood-atonement, and believes in it: these crimes are the result. But while he wields absolute power as at present, and as he will continue to do for years to come, they will go unpunished, and there will be ten chances for a Mormon who kills an apostate to escape hanging, to one for a Gentile who is caught stealing a Mormon's horse."

"What do you think of our prospects, Bishop?"

"You will get away without further trouble, thanks to a lucky circumstance of which I have just learned: General Connor is sending a Cavalry Company to escort a supply train from Fort Bridger, and has consented to have them travel to that point with the stage. It will make the journey a few days longer, but your safety will be greatly increased. I have received a confirmation of the plot to ditch the stage at night in the Weber river, and I hope that the miscreants who have planned that job will just try to carry it out. But of course they

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* The Robinson case is historical.

will be warned of the picnic that has been prepared for them."

After telling Spencer that he would give him such financial aid as he might need to make a start in life, and assuring him of the keen interest he should always feel in the success and happiness of himself and Hagar, the Bishop appeared greatly mollified by his reflections and said :—

"What I have lately passed through has been a cruel and bitter experience. But I feel that it was a direct punishment inflicted upon me by Providence for my fiendish wrong to Hagar's mother. It smites me now like a lash of adder's stings laid on by an avenging spirit! From the moment I met my daughter I felt a mysterious change stealing into my heart—into my very life's blood, and ere long was ready to forsake everything else in this world for her. She was like a will-o'-the-wisp leading me on to my ruin, and I pursued until literally hurled into the yawning gulf. It is a wonder I did not lose my mind—God has indeed been merciful. From that day I swore that I would either die or mend my life. The solution came at last. That sweet girl whom I abandoned, cursed, and counted among the dead, has come here, brought by you, to save me from damnation, and to snatch you from a life like mine! Oh, Charles! you will cherish her with all the tenderness and sensibility of which you are capable. Lavish on her the sweetest and truest attributes of your nature, and soothe and guard her ever as your better self. The good wife is the good man's visible soul—the immortal part of him which dwells beside him day by day and keeps him in the right. Should you ever feel a pang because of the accident of her birth—"

Here the Bishop's emotion choked him so that he could not proceed.

Spencer, laying his hand on his shoulder, replied :

"No, Bishop Langley, your contrition is the only atonement you can make for that, and Hagar's nobility of character leaves no room to doubt that, to whatever extent you wronged her mother, she, at least, was true."

"Yes, I alone am guilty, and must sometime bear the punishment for all the chain of evils that has resulted from my act."

He dwelt upon the moral aspects of his history, but made no attempt to excuse himself except on the ground of ignorance, and even retreating from that by admitting that his conscience warned him. Reverting then to his Mormon experience, he continued:—

"I curse the day I went into polygamy even more than the day I pretended to accept Joe Smith as a prophet. To be entirely frank with you, I have regarded the whole thing as a fraud from the first. I was wild, self-willed, ignorant, and nothing less extravagantly grotesque than Parley P., as I met him in Ohio, or the Saints as I found them in Nauvoo, could have satisfied my notions at that time. I held nothing sacred, and regarded polygamy as a hugh joke like many others who secretly accepted it at Nauvoo. It may prosper so long as we are isolated as at present, but cannot stand contact with the world. Utah will never be admitted to the Union until this practice is abandoned, and a majority of the population will soon prefer the solid advantages of statehood to this sickening privelege, which is practically the only inducement the Church now has to offer."

"I sincerely hope your prediction will be fulfilled. But a state with Brigham Young as its chief magistrate would be, if possible, one step worse than the present regime. As matters stand the non-polygamous majority which might, and probably does, at heart, prefer statehood to the privilege of plural marriage, is placed at a disadvantage."

"That is true," replied Langley. "Those of the majority are cowed by the polygamous minority; and every time Brigham threatens them for failing to fulfil their obligations to the church, they hurry into polygamy as if afraid the lightning might strike them if they disobeyed. The European peasant element, which is necessarily ignorant and oblivious of American customs and ideas, is led or driven at will; and (luckily, perhaps), like the crowd everywhere, they 'lack gall to make oppression bitter.' Being under momentary obligations to the church fund for emigration or other favors, they shut their eyes to the injustice and tyranny of the priesthood, knowing that their present interests are best subserved by their silent obedience. Hypocrisy walks with bold and shameless front in high places. In my recent specu-

lations one of my thoughts has been to raise a party for statehood and monogamy. In a covert way I hinted my plan to several of my intimates whom I know to be mere time-servers, taking care to egg them on without disclosing my secret. They could criticise in a whisper, oh! yes, and say plainly enough in the dark what they thought of this and that, and how they disapproved thus and so. But their eagerness for pickings outweighs their convictions. They prefer present ease and safety at the cost of self-respect, to an honest manhood at the expense of court favor. I shall, therefore, secede alone, and set my house to rights in my own way. I will provide honestly for my wives and children, but will no longer live in open defiance of my country's laws to keep the favor of a despotic priesthood."

This announcement was wholly unexpected, and for a moment Spencer gazed at the Bishop with mute surprise.

"This is a sudden resolution—one that you have formed since——"

"Since Hagar came! Ah! God knows I am penitent, and that I humbly pray for forgiveness! I told my daughter she was an angel sent to save me, though I could not then see in what lay my salvation. Polygamy has wrought nothing but misery. 'The abomination of desolation,' even King Solomon the wise was ruined by it. Its effect is to pamper the baseness of man's nature, and at last damn him like any other great sin. It has chained me body and soul. But, as I was among the first to give my support to the error, I should not now complain if I reap a large share of the punishment. The sweet face of my wronged child is the mirror in which I see what a villain I have been."

Edwin Langley's remorse was genuine, and before the stage which bore the young couple over the plains had reached the Missouri river, Zion was shaken to its center by his public renunciation.

The night before they started he could not sleep, but paced his room goaded by unhappy reflections, and hatching plans for the future.

Next morning he went early to Ben Halliday's office and arranged all details for the long and perilous journey. A crowd began to gather in the street hours be-

fore the stage was expected to start, and as the day advanced there were so many symptoms of disorder, that Bishop Langley and the young travellers were relieved when it was announced that a squadron of cavalry was coming. Not until then would the Bishop allow Hagar or Spencer to leave the house. There was a tearful scene of leave-taking at the Bishop's, and while driving to Halliday's Langley remarked to Hagar that he hoped she would not go away hating him or others she had seen in Zion.

"No, Bishop Langley," replied Hagar, "I haven't much capacity for hating; but I shall always think kindly and gratefully of you for your goodness to us. I am sorry for all who suffer, and your religion (I mean polygamy) seems to bring only misery to those who practice it. A state of wretchedness is bad enough when it comes as one of the accidents of life; but it seems to me not only a folly but a crime to make wretchedness the foundation of a system, and to call such a system divine. I pity the sorrowing women and the neglected children, and pray for misguided men not only here but everywhere, for my feeling towards them is that of sympathy rather than hate."

"Yours is a rare and heavenly soul," said Langley.

"No, I only strive to give others what I know that I require myself."

"Then, in your benevolence, will you not sometimes think and pray for me?"

They were nearing the stage station and the loud blast of a bugle warned them that the stage was about to start. There was a weak attempt at cheering by the crowd as the Bishop's carriage drew up, but at a gesture from Langley the mob gave way and the young people who were the object of so much vulgar curiosity, were enabled to gain their places in the coach. At a second blast from the bugle a portion of the Cavalry formed in the street ahead of the stage, the rest closed up the rear and the procession moved off at a good pace towards Emigration Canon, a narrow gorge leading through the mountains on the eastern side of the valley.

The fatigues and discomforts incident to that lonely and perilous journey through the American Wilderness are not to be equalled now. The old Concord jogged

along both night and day, the horses or mules being changed at intervals of from twelve to twenty miles, and the stops and stations were usually brief. With few exceptions the stations consisted of a solitary stockade built of logs in the mountains, and of mud on the plains, and there were not more than half a dozen places between the Mormon Capital and the Missouri river where anything approaching a wholesome meal was to be obtained. For the most part, bacon, corn dodgers and coffee were the staple diet. But it takes an Argonaut of those good old days to appreciate the luxurious palace cars and the sumptuous refreshment stations which have long since superseded the swaying Concord, and the grizzly stockade.

In the course of those monotonous stretches over plains that were like the sea, and along mountain roads where the sensations of the traveller alternated between uphill and downhill weariness, Hagar first learned how delicate, thoughtful and kind Charles Spencer really was. She bore the hardships of the pilgrimage with becoming fortitude, and put the other passengers (all of whom were men,) on their metal by her unfailing good nature. It was undoubtedly due to this spirit of contentment that she reached her destination in such excellent condition after a task which severely tested the endurance of strong men.

One fine day in July the old coach was ferried over the broad Missouri, and drove up to the little town of Council Bluffs. The first news the passengers heard was that Vicksburg had been captured by General Grant, and that General Lee had been repulsed at Gettysburg; and as Hagar stepped out of the stage she found herself in the arms of a Union officer. It was James Taine.

Colonel Taine had become so familiar with Western life and character in his youth that he was not at all suprised to hear that all the passengers had vied with each other in the gallant deference of their demeanor towards Hagar. He had secured the best available accommodations at the hotel for her, and was so bright and lively that she soon forgot the chain of sad memories that was awakened by this unexpected meeting. Spencer grasped his hand warmly and said:—

"I ask you now for what I once refused you. The wall of icy bigotry which then held my heart has been melted away."

"We shall be friends—nay, brothers, till death."

James was determined that no reference to Hagar's misfortune should be made if he could prevent it.

"So, like a true missionary," he said to Hagar when they reached their apartments at the hotel, "you return bearing your sheaf with you?"

His good nature was contagious.

"I am not her only convert," said Spencer. "She counts a Bishop and I do not know how many lesser magnates of the priesthood to whom she brought a light before unknown to them."

"Well, I am delighted. Before your first telegram came in reply to my letter I was so depressed about Hagar's fate that my wounds would not heal, and I was in danger of fatal consequences. From that day I began to mend, and this meeting has effected a complete cure. If it were not for my game arm I should not know I had been hit, and would feel called upon to hug you both."

His left arm was still carried in a sling, a portion of the bone above the elbow having been removed.

During the evening plans were discussed, and Colonel Taine would not listen to anything which did not begin with a visit to Chestnut Grove.

"The place is desolate and wants cheering up. It is Hagar's home, and will be always whether she is married or single."

Spencer had serious scruples against anything which seemed like dependance, and would only consent to a temporary visit to the Colonel on the condition that he and his wife were to be left to their own resources as soon as the marriage ceremony was performed.

With this understanding they took the train for Cleveland.

CHAPTER XXX.

During the siege of Vicksburg there was a hot combat one evening on the banks of the Big Black river between a scouting party under Brig. General Philip Leigh and a Rebel force which had mysteriously found cover in the woods at the Union rear. The fighting was at close range and, in part, hand to hand. The Confederates were put to flight, but not until many men on both sides had perished. Near the close of the fight General Leigh was pierced by a musket-ball and fell from his horse. The surgeon to whom he was carried by some of his loving comrades thought the wound was mortal, but an ambulance with a strong guard was dispatched with all haste to take him to one of the field hospitals in front of Vicksburg.

In gathering up the wounded late at night another officer in Union dress was found whom none could identify. He was removed with others to a field hospital next day, and when a train of wounded was sent North a little later to escape the dreadful heat, both he and General Leigh were taken to the great Union Hospital at Covington.

From some of the Rebels who were captured it was learned that the expedition had been sent to carry out a device, formed by its Commander, to abduct or murder General Grant. None of them could or would tell who the Commander of the Rebel force was, or who had sent it on its mission of treachery, but it was ascertained that many of the officers and men were clad in the uniform of Union Soldiers, and that the contingent was composed of some of the worst desperadoes in Bragg's army.

When General Leigh began to feel well enough to pay any attention to his surroundings he was interested in the gossip of the attendants on the subject of the Rebel bushwhacker who had been picked up as one of the Union wounded and was one of the patients in Orchard Ward No. 7, where the General lay. The ward was a

tent of the new hospital type, and contained six beds. By the time he was able to get up there were no other patients left in the ward except himself and the Confederate, and the latter had only begun to speak intelligibly within a few days. One day while the doctors were removing the bandages from the stranger's head General Leigh went to the bedside and was nonplussed on finding that the man was none other than the Rev. Mr. Smiles. The blond hair and beard were long and unkempt, and the face bore marks of suffering, but there was no doubt of the man's identity and General Leigh experienced much difficulty in suppressing the exclamation of surprise that rose to his lips. He reflected that here was a kind of retribution.

On the cot before him, with sightless eyes and life fast ebbing away, lay the betrayer of the innocent Hagar; and the Rebel bandit whose well-matured plan to murder the Union Commander at Vicksburg, he himself had frustrated by the narrowest chance and almost at the cost of his life. The case supplied him an interesting subject for speculation, and served to render his own captivity less irksome. It was in vain that Doctor Bruce advised him to make the journey by slow stages to his home near Cleveland, for he was determined to remain in the hospital until he should be able to return to the field of action.

A few days later Lamont began to show symptoms of improvement and became very talkative. At first he would only speak in French, and when General Leigh asked him in that tongue if he knew where he was, he said:—

"Yes, I am in New Orleans. I have struck the blow that saved our cause, and from this long sleep I shall soon wake to see the South triumphant. Won't you take off this bandage, Doctor?"

"I am a fellow-invalid," said the General, "but I heard the doctors say that the bandage must remain across your eyes for the present."

"But I will have it off!" exclaimed Lamont. He seized the bandage with his bony fingers and tore it off. "What's the matter? Is it night? Where's the light? Where are you? By this he had raised himself to a

sitting posture and stretched forth his emaciated arms feeling out in every direction.

"I would advise you to be patient. We are in a Union hospital, and you are suffering from a wound on the head which temporarily affects your sight. There is no attendant here just now and you may injure yourself."

"Am I blind?" demanded Lamont.

"Temporarily, yes; but if you will be quiet a moment I will call an attendant, from whom you may hear more definitely about your situation."

As General Leigh went out Lamont brushed his hands across his eyes uneasily ,and said to himself:

"Is it so bad as this! Am I deprived of that blessed sense without which the world is a blank and barren mystery? Oh, God! rather let me die than live like this in utter blackness. It is worse than anything I had ever conceived."

As the days went by Lamont became very friendly and confidential toward his invisible companion, and the assurance given him by the doctors that he would almost certainly recover his sight with his restoration to health, made him so cheerful that he appeared to have regained a measure of the buoyancy and good nature which had characterized his impersonation of the Rev. Mr. Smiles. Philip found him a decidedly interesting study. Lamont guessed from his accent, that he was a native of the South, and Philip took care to state that he was from Louisiana leaving the confederate to infer that he had found a colleague as well as a compatriot in the Union Hospital. The intimacy grew apace, and one day Lamont gave a full account of the plot he was about to execute at Vicksburg when his force was surprised and overthrown.

One night when Lamont was fast asleep the General sat musing beside his pallet and fell into this vein of reflection: "Here is my opportunity to acquaint myself with the career of this libertine, and I shall practice whatever deceit I find necessary to draw him out. I feel a strange and fascinating curiosity to pry into the life of this man who has made himself so perfect a villain, and at any cost I must know the secret of his stay at Newberg when I unwittingly made him an in-

valid, and left him there to become Josephine's patient and guest. This is a test within my grasp, and I have a right to make it—at the peril of weal or woe."

He spent a miserably restless night, and next day after making a tour about the hospital grounds returned to the ward. Taking a chair quite near Lamont's cot he said:

"Well, I have come back to hear something more about your adventures. I find it infernally dull here. I always was a bad one to endure confinement or pain, and am more than ever of opinion that a musket ball through the body is not a first-class nerve remedy if the patient happens to live."

"You have at least one advantage over me. You can see what is going on about you, and if you should get a letter from your wife and sweetheart you wouldn't have to ask the footman to read it for you."

The General was aware that a negro had called with several messages, and listened attentively. Lamont went on:

"For my own part, I should be as meek as a dove and as patient as a lamb if I could only see the sweet-voiced angels whose presence here at times seems to perfume the air. Some of my most pleasant moments have been passed in a sick room where I was the interesting invalid, and Beauty danced attendance beside my bed. But, I am sorry to say that my susceptibility in the direction of the fair sex is about to cost me rather dear."

"Yes? how so? Are you a faltering Benedict who is to receive his chastisement in kind?"

"Oh no—my wife is another Lucrece, but she has found me out and insists upon taking a ridiculously serious view of the matter."

"What a pity it is that some women and often very good ones at that, will persist in regarding our peccadillos as venal."

"Perhaps my wife has better cause than most of them to complain, for my last conquest, which happened at the North while I was executing a special commission, created an uncomfortable scandal in which my real name, and so on, figured somewhat too prominently. I was travelling, of course, under a nom de guerre: you may have heard of the case, some months back, at Cleve-

land, Ohio? The Northern papers were full of it, and it was circulated all over the South as the elopement of a Confederate spy with an old Yankee parson's daughter."

"Yes," said Philip, with affected urbanity, "Yes, I have heard of it—an interesting episode, I should say."

"Very—and that adventure was interwoven from its beginning almost to the end with another hardly less absorbing."

"Is it possible?" As General Leigh said this he experienced a sensation of deadly sickness. A sudden chill seized him for an instant, then left him with his teeth almost chattering, and his hands and feet as cold as ice.

Before Lamont could resume his talk the negro, Colt, came in, bearing a letter and a small parcel which he took to the invalid. General Leigh got up with the intention of withdrawing, but Lamont hearing his movement, said:—"Stay, my friend. Colt only brings a curtain lecture in cold ink, which I am going to ask you to read for me. This gentleman here, Colt, is a scholar and man of the world who is perfectly congenial to me. He is going to help me to set things right, if I need any help. Now, what message from my fair lady to-day? Any hope of reconciliation? The doctor said yesterday that there would be no objection to her coming to see me now, and the children also; but if she will not come herself she might, at least send them. What did she say in answer to my submissive greeting?" General Leigh said he would be back presently, and went outside.

"Madam is in a sad state of despondency, sir, and sent no message to-day except that she would permit one of the children to visit you if you thought it perfectly safe. But she says that the odors about a hospital are very unhealthy, and that she is afraid that either of the children might receive a dangerous shock from seeing you stretched upon this pallet in your present distress."

"Pshaw! a child would know nothing of my condition, it would be satisfied when told that I am lying down with a headache. But did you tell her all the details of my last enterprize, how I labored and planned to ruin the Yankee armies in Mississippi, and how I have suffered since my fall—all of which I have done and endured as an atonement for my sins to her? Are you sure you made it all clear?"

"I am, sir," replied Colt," and she was greatly moved by it. But, as I told you yesterday, the torn letter in your handwriting which Mrs. Green brought to her after the ghost-like visit of that young woman, who declared that you had ruined her, did more to embitter her against you than everything else combined. It was a misfortune that madam ever went to that house. But she took the matter into her own hands sir, and I was unable to prevent it." Colt, who was a tall and fine looking man with a very slight tincture of Caucasian blood in his veins, quietly wiped away a tear.

"Well, never mind, Colt. Hurry back and tell your mistress that my only hope is that she will forgive me. I shall make no arguments against the genuineness of letters or other evidence that is intended to ruin me, but you can bear in mind that for aught she knows, these things are forgeries—"

"I am sorry, sir, very sorry, but she has compared this letter with several of those she received from you at about the same time, and found the writing identical. But, not satisfied with her own judgment she called at a leading bank with the two specimens of your hand-writing, and submitted them to an expert who declared that both were undoubtedly written by the same hand, and apparently at the same sitting. I must, therefore, tell you frankly, sir, that there is much more hope that she will pardon you than that she will believe you innocent."

"Well then, tell her that I cast myself unconditionally at her feet where I shall remain and perish unless she stretches forth her hand to raise me up. The doctors agree that I shall recover my sight when they are able to remove a clot of blood which temporarily encumbers the nerves at the base of the brain. Hence I shall not be a wretched blind-man who cannot find his road away from home, but a good, o'd-fashioned, bourgeois husband who will henceforth seek for beauty only in his wife's boudoir. Yes, Colt, I shall turn over a new leaf, and do my best to regain her esteem and respect, which I have so justly forfeited. Hurry back and tell her all this, and bring at least one of my darlings as soon as you can. I guess by that poor devil's moaning that the doctors are in the next tent, so they

will call here in a moment. Assure Mrs. Lamont of my humble submission and my abject penitence—(to a religious woman like her, you can't say too much about penitence, you know, Colt,) and tell her that I am in a frenzy to see the babies. You ought to get back here with them in an hour, for the hospital smells are most offensive to those from the outside, towards evening."

"It will take about an hour and a half but I shall not lose a moment. In this small parcel is the Johnny-cake you wished Dinah to send you. She said it was made in the home style."

"Thank good old Dinah for me," said Lamont, taking the packet in his hand, "and now be off; remember, you can not make it too forcible that I am dying to see the children, for there is nothing that is so gratifying to a good mother as proofs of the father's affection for her children, and mine, you know, is genuine and sincere."

A doctor now entered the tent and sat down at Lamont's bedside. Colt hurried away, having left the parcel that contained a piece of Johnny-cake from old Dinah, on the table.

"Good day, Doctor," said Lamont, after the surgeon had greeted him. "I want you to inform me if there is anything in the medical code which renders this contraband?" He had torn the paper from the square chunk of johnny-cake, and held it towards the doctor.

"Not that I am aware of," he replied.

"Then I may eat it?"

"Yes, provided you do not take too much at a time."

"Thanks, doctor, thanks. I only wish we could get up a little miracle by which to prescribe a two pound loaf of similar quality to each hungry "Johnny" on the Southern side of Mason and Dixon's line!"

The doctor remained with him about half an hour, talking quietly, and observing his case, which the physicians considered an extremely interesting one. After he went out and the attendant had put things to rights about the ward, General Leigh came in.

Lamont was even more loquacious than before. "What do you think I have here?" he asked holding up the loaf of johnny-cake.

"Something from home, I presume."

"Yes, and its delicious aroma calls up pleasant memories of days when the South was happy—when, in place of the sulphur fumes of battle, we had the air perfumed with the breath of sweet flowers and of lovely women;—when, instead of the shrieks and groans of wounded and dying men, we heard only laughter and song."

Soon drifting away from these poetic memories he began again about his exploits, and told how he had been victimized by designing women.

"That is the only way to put it," said he, "for they claim that we are irresistible, and we must set up a counter claim. Mine is that they are irresistable."

"Perfectly valid, I should say—perfectly so. And it is clear that your conquests among the fair have been many and terrible."

"Many—and—blissful to them—terrible to me—now that I am found out. I shall want your help. It needs a scholar to induce a woman to see these matters in their proper light. If I hadn't been raised a priest I should enlist the good offices of one of that trade; but they have a pious habit of pressing negotiations somewhat too far on their own account, so that I prefer a scholar—"

"In spite of your eventful life it is clear that you have yet had time for observations somewhat critical."

"Well, yes," continued Lamont. "By nature I was a moralist. But early in life I bumped my head against destiny in such a way as to make me see stars, and there has been an "im" before my morality ever since My friend, whether you be young or old, beware yourself and let your sons and daughters beware of any man or set of men whose positions depend, not upon their character or their good works, but upon their talent for cringing, their taste for hypocrisy, and, especially, their devilish love of intrigue. The favors of women in these days to their ante-nuptial lovers are admittedly most generous, but those they accord to their priests extend to the full period of their halcyon days."

"This is no parable;" observed Philip. "Come, come, a case in point. You say that you were raised as one of these holy men?"

"Yes, and for that reason, I shall have nothing more explicit to say in this connection."

"But what about 'the favors of women to ante-nuptial lovers?'"

"Of that presently. But I want to tell you now that I have taken soundings on the moral question. A short sentence solves the riddle. There are three institutions in this country which are absolutely controlled by women, namely: Fashion, Expense, and Morals. Concerning the first and second, I may write a book later in life, but of the last here is the verdict: Women foster immorality in a variety of ways,—by their own wantonness; by defective training of their children; by their toleration and admiration of the most abandoned libertines, and by giving themselves up to vicious lives. I speak as an expert, and as one who should have been a moralist but for the accident to which I have already alluded. For as my favorite Armstrong sang:—

"Virtue——
Is sense and spirit with humanity;
'Tis sometimes angry, and its frown confounds;
'Tis even vindictive, but in vengeance just.
Knaves fain would laugh at it; some great ones dare;
But at his heart the most undaunted son
Of Fortune dreads its name and awful charms."

"Every woman is the architect of her own morality, and no man can add a particle of material to the structure without her permission. You are not one of the common herd who will laugh at hearing morals discussed by a worldling, for you can thoroughly appreciate the saw, that 'it takes a thief to catch a thief.' No man can size you up the frailties of woman like a holy priest, as none other grows so fat upon them."

"While admitting the general truth of your remarks, I submit that you seem to speak with something resembling the rancor of an apostate whenever you pronounce the name of 'priest.' I confess that for personal reasons there is associated with the thing more than the name, in my mind, something loathsome and accursed: but I am curious to know why it acts as so serious an irritant to one who is Sir Placidity with regard to most other subjects. The Republic offers a free field for all men to ply their trade, you know, and I have no doubt that the Confederacy will do likewise, when it is established."

"It is the women in the case that irritate me. Every honest man must have a woman, and no man could get more than one at a time if women were what they should be. But the priest being denied the one which is his just due becomes a brute by taking such viands as are offered along the shady paths of his dark life, and daily trespassing on other's moors. Being outwardly the custodian of morals, he is secretly the victim of the seductive aberrations of his patients. The Middle Age barbarism, of which he is the logical product, is being perpetuated here inside high walls and castles with labyrinths of secret passages where sealed lips and broken hearts keep forever the hideous mysteries which are blacker than those of the grave. You might laugh as I have often done, could you but hear a model abolitionist orator prate about giving the thick-skinned African his freedom, while thousands of tender victims of his own blood are sent to the ghostly prisons which frown on every eminence in the land by the mandates of a foreign despot. And for what? My friend, time is long and the gods never peach upon the serpent ways of men. It takes a Garibaldi to lay them bare, and nations should learn the lesson taught by the spectacle. These poor fools who are immolated with so much holy pomp are the worst of all slaves, held in bondage to give a fiendish lie a pestilent life. The dumb foreign minions who toil here and grow sleek under the Latin lash of the prince of tyrants, are by him deprived of rights and liberties which are theirs by virtue of our laws; and (O! sweet Consistency!), while the North looks on and smiles at this iniquity, it cuts our throats for keeping the blacks in chains!"

"You are becoming interesting," said General Leigh, surprised at the warmth of this man, whom he thought a strange mixture of talent and perversity, upon so eccentric a theme. "You have certainly struck the true channel in this case when you reduce it to a question of the right of a foreign power to corporeal control over our citizens."

"Exactly. If I attain to a post of influence in the Confederacy, as I no doubt shall, I shall champion a law to forbid wherever our power extends, the imposition of monastic vows or monastic life upon either men or

women. It should be done for the same reason and in the same spirit as that which moved the English Government in India to abolish the infamous suttee and the horrid Car of Juggernaut; and as that which moves the North to legislate against Mormon polygamy. For men and women will do anything, no matter how monstrous, under the pressure of priestly dictation and the insidious monitions of superstition. They want protection from themselves, from their ignorance and stupidity as well as from robbers and assassins. Let theologies flourish so long as they may, but in the name of decency let us prune them of their exotic Dark Age fungi if they are to exist within the reach of our laws."

Lamont continued talking for some time on this subject, and finally said:—

"But, I must return to my own little story."

"Yes, to the 'parallel adventure.'"

"I had gone to Ohio to bring back a traitor—the son of old Captain Leigh who was recently killed on one of Bayous. The youngster had settled down, and married a woman whom I had known well as a girl. She was to be educated in a convent and I was a novitiate not far off. She was beautiful. I told her that I was going to stay in the world for her sake, or else she must leave it for mine. Well, I don't know which was the most tempted, but we both fell—" As Lamont continued in his calm narrative style, General Leigh looked as if he had been struck dumb, and sat staring at him with eyes glaring like those of an infuriated animal. "It was only a little bit of a sin, but the poor girl, poor Josephine, was inconsolable, and disappeared the same day entirely out of my sight. I never met her again until I went to Leigh's house one evening prior to having him forwarded to the South. In the melee I was knocked down and badly hurt, and dwelt there with her as her patient for a month. Strange, wasn't it?"

"Yes, very," replied the general. Though racked by a miserable feeling of dread, he was determined to hear this tale to the bitter end.

"After I had been there a few days, I began to fancy that she had recognized me, though I had changed so much that it was absurd for me to suppose such a thing. Her distant and abstracted manner was entrancing.

She was like the moon, shedding her soft and gentle radiance all around, but keeping herself clean out of reach. I was never more impressed with a woman's superiority, but I determined to put her to the test. There was no opportunity for this experiment until later, for my bonny little Hagar was constantly there, and seemed to copy the other's dignified graciousness while all the time loving me to distraction. At length an occasion presented itself the very evening before I left Ohio and took Hagar to Canada. I never entered upon a conquest with more spirit and determination. Going to the house quite early in the evening, I soon ascertained that she was entirely alone, and took precautions to prevent an interruption. She never looked so well. She was really superb. I am an expert in these things, you know, and "superb" is not too strong a term. Had she been some Spanish donna dressed to receive her lover she could not have been more bewitchingly sweet to look upon."

"It must have been a vivid picture to so impress a man of your experience."

"Yes, it was—it was a vivid picture. I happened to have with me a splendid diamond ring which I had given her at Vicksburg where our last meeting had taken place, and which she had abandoned to one of my friends after she had "stooped to folly." This I determined to offer her again, but she refused it, and parried every effort I could make to gain her sympathy. The night was wearing out, and I was compelled to retreat in a state of inglorious disgust."

"Why did she not kill you?" asked Philip, with a look which indicated the struggle that was taking place within him.

"She would have done so, but there was no weapon at hand more formidable than her bodkin. She assailed me with that, and, of course, I was more importunate than ever. That is what I call my negative adventure—there's not another exactly like it in my catalogue."

"A man would be a brute to wrong a woman like that."

"Oh; all is fair in love and war, you know," replied Lamont.

"Treachery at all times and under all circumstances is unfair; and I hold that a deserter who delivers his

comrades up to slaughter, is a milder type of villain than a man who has the heart to ruin and abandon the woman he pretends to love."

"And yet, would you believe it, her husband, who was a brave and gallant fellow (and is still if he's above ground) treated her like a drab? But for all that I believe he loved her, and I know that she worships him. There's not a truer or more beautiful woman living, but it seems that a suspicion or positive knowledge of her ante-nuptial sin has damned her in his sight. We have all heard of such cases, of course; but, as a rule, the interested parties come to grief after a day or two, or exist together in life-long misery. Here is a case in which the man should forget and be happy; perhaps he might if he only knew the truth; and I have thought since my discovery that I would sometime write an anonymous letter to Leigh to tell him what a jewel he is trampling under foot. But now that I have such a troublesome kettle of fish at home, I am afraid I shall not be able to do much in the role of domestic pacificator."

As Lamont went on in this strain General Leigh was suffering the most poignant agony of spirit. Every feeling of hatred or vengeance he had experienced towards his stricken foe, was passing away, and he thought now only of oblivion for himself. In that dense mist of confusion and shame which seemed to envelope him, his life presented neither charm nor hope, and the one attractive possibility ahead was to court death on the nearest battle-field. Summoning a few brief words of apology he turned away and walked outside the tent.

Towards evening the negro, Colt, returned with a message that his mistress was overcome by her husband's contrition and the sufferings he was enduring for the sacred cause of the South, and had determined, if she could get permission, to visit the hospital the following day with her children.

At dusk General Leigh went in. A candle was burning on the table near Lamont's cot and the wounded man was rolling about restlessly. The General resumed his former place and said after making a common-place remark about the threatening weather of the evening:—

"What became of the old parson's daughter after you left her?"

"I don't know. She probably took the common road, the only one that is, ordinarily, open to women who "stoop to folly," and "find too late that men betray." But life's too short to speculate on the fate of these dainty atoms in the great cosmic laboratory. Poor little thing! She might, quite possibly, have met with a worse fate, for she had suitors two, when I found her,—one a farmer's bumpkin of the neighborhood, the other a mendicant Mormon elder. These were my rivals. But the girl was an honest little creature, and I admit that I had to play an unfair game."

General Leigh was silent.

"But now, my friend," continued Lamont, "You must help me. In spite of the rather eccentric route I have pursued through life, I feel a lingering tenderness for my faithful wife, and something akin to adoration for her children. For a year I have not seen them, and Colt brings me word that she will come here to-morrow to lay her dear hand on my miserable head and forgive all my sins. The hope of this meeting thrills me with a transport of joy.... I wish the wind wouldn't howl like that—has it put out the light?"

"No," replied General Leigh, "the attendants have made all secure. The draft we feel here comes through the cracks in the floor and is not likely to affect the light much."

"But the rain is coming through; I hear it dropping."

"The first heavy shower in one of these sudden storms will send a spray through the best of canvas; but, when once wet, a tent like this is as good as iron for a steady down-pour."

"Do you think it will soon pass over?" Asked Lamont nervously, as a rattling thunder-clap seemed to linger just above the tent roof.

"Oh, yes: these squalls never last long, I believe."

"If you were never deprived of your sight, you cannot imagine how horrible it is to lie here helplessly and have the lightning flash through your very brain. There must be little the matter with my eyes, for before each roar of the thunder this place lights up

with the glare of a furnace. You will not leave me till the storm subsides?"

"No. I shall not go outside again to-night, and am in no hurry to retire."

As if oppressed by a presentiment of evil, Lamont found it impossible to pursue the subject of conversation he had begun, and kept reverting to the changing aspects of the storm. At one moment the rain came down in sheets, and, as it lulled, flash on flash of lightning seemed to annihilate material things and take entire possession of the world. The thunder came nearer, making the very air tremble, while the writhing wind, now with a strange moan, now with an exulting rush, was like a fierce ally of the storm, having power to walk the earth and smite its cowering creatures.

Both men had been silent for some time, hushed by the din of the elements that made the loudest human voice like the whisper of an infant, when one of the tent-ropes on the windward side, snapped, and the frail structure swayed ominously.

"What's that?" cried Lamont.

"A rope has broken. I must call a guard, for another gust like that will blow the tent down."

The gale seemed to answer with increased fury, and scarcely had General Leigh got outside when the roof-pole broke and the tent collapsed.

Such was the havoc caused by the storm in the hospital encampment that the day and night forces of guards and attendants were all occupied, and it was some time before General Leigh found help.

It seemed an age to the blind patient in Orchard ward No. 7, as he lay there pinioned to his cot by the weight of drenching canvas. When finally removed it was seen that he was suffering from acute nervous shock, and that his condition was serious. He could not speak, but when his wife and children came in the afternoon he made a sign that he knew them, and at sunset his name was added to the long list on the Register of the dead.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Hagar's return to her old home, combining, though it did, many elements of happiness, was saddened by gloomy memories of the past. The episode of her flight and its fatal consequences, came back with the vivid distinctness of a terrible nightmare. She met no more the kind look and gentle words of her dear Father Taine, to whom her final return for all his affection and care was an act of treachery. Spencer discerned that she was not happy, and a few days after their arrival he laid his case before Colonel Taine. The latter urged him to rest contentedly at Chestnut Grove, saying that he need not be in any hurry to seek employment, or think at all about ways and means, as Hagar's home should be his.

"Half of what I have is Hagar's already," said the Colonel, "and to you and her I shall soon leave the rest. Content yourself here, my dear Spencer, and when the first flush of this girlish grief wears off, you'll find your sweetheart brighter than ever and we shall have one of the merriest weddings and one of the happiest matches that was ever made in Ohio."

But Spencer was not satisfied. He would never marry, he said, unless he could keep a wife by his own exertions. Much as he loved Hagar he would rather leave her there and go into the world to make a position for himself, than settle down to the enjoyment of another's wealth, no matter how generously or rightfully it might be bestowed. And, despite Col. Taine's protests, Hagar's entreaties, and his own reluctance at being separated from the darling who held his heart like a spell, he tore himself away, and with a letter of introduction from Colonel Taine to the editor of the "Daily Globe," went to Cleveland in search of work. His aptitude, enthusiasm and sterling good sense, were soon recognized by the editor, while his knowledge of short-hand, then an uncommon acquirement, made him

extremely useful. It was scarcely a week before he wrote Hagar in his daily budget, that he had been assured $700, for the first year, and he thought they might be able to marry in the fall. She was not insensible to the true manliness displayed by his pluck and independence, and the process of writing one or two missives filled with wisdom and love, every day, and reading a like correspondence from him, had a marvelous effect upon her spirits.

One day she was sitting on the verandah occupied with a piece of embroidery, when Colonel Taine returned unexpectedly from a visit to Cincinnati. With him was a gentleman whom Hagar was sure she had seen before, but for some time she tried in vain to recollect when or where. At last she knew that it was Dr. Bruce, whom she had heard lecture on the Mormons at Cincinnati. She was visibly embarrassed, and Colonel Taine, with his left arm still in a sling, led his guest into the parlor. Leaving him there, he returned to Hagar.

"You are looking charming and happy, dear Hagar. May I not tell you of a pleasant surprise I have for you?"

"Oh," she replied, "I have become so accustomed to surprises that nothing can astonish me now. Each event of the past two years has been a surprise; your meeting me at Council Bluffs was one; but the greatest surprise of all, is the wonderful kindness I have met with since my return." Her lips quivered, and Colonel Taine interrupted quickly—

"Nonsense, my dear Sister, you are talking sheer nonsense. And now you shall have an opportunity to listen to facts. Or shall we rather call this a legend, a true legend? 'Once upon a time there was a young lady named Hagar. In infancy she was stolen from her parents and left among strangers. The poor father died in the fruitless search for her, but the mother lived long enough to place her wealth in the care of a good man for the benefit of her darling, should she ever be found, and at a time when the said 'darling' was supposed to be lost by her adopted friends, she is found by the good man who holds a fortune at her disposal,'—Now what do you think of that?"

"It proves that you could compose an astonishing romance if you would only try."

"As an opinion," replied James, playfully, "that will pass. But please allow me to present the case in a light which will not permit of your reviewing my talents satirically. You remember, when we were children we used to lie awake nights talking about what we should do with our millions when we got them? You were then quite certain that you would squander yours upon dolls and cart loads of candy; and I was as surely going to devote mine to terrible expeditions to the West for the slaying of Indians and buffalos, and lassoing of wild horses on the pampas. I admit that I have considerably changed my plans, and I venture to think that if you were to suddenly find yourself in possession of a fortune, you would devote a larger portion of it to—well, say to charitable uses than to dolls and candy?"

"Yes, I think I should," she said, smiling.

"But," continued Colonel Taine, "I have strayed entirely from my legend, so we will permit it now to resolve itself into real elements; you are yourself the infant who was carried away and lost, and the fortune, amounting to a figure that I will not now repeat, is at your command."

She was still incredulous, and for a while could not be induced to regard the matter as anything more than a joke. But when he told her that Dr. Bruce was the good man who held the fortune in trust, and that he had come to Chestnut Grove for the purpose of consulting her respecting the money, she became intensely interested, and her face flushed with excitement. Dr. Bruce noticed instantly that Hagar bore an unmistakable likeness to the unhappy woman whose last will he had come to execute, and was fully assured by this and other circumstances, that she was the heir intended by "Lady Clare." He came thoroughly prepared in every way for the business he had to transact, but perhaps the most remarkable feature about his embassy was the delicate tact with which he evaded all questions which called for answers he had fully determined not to give. Left alone in the library with Hagar, he said:

"Your mother was by no means certain that you would ever be found, and therefore gave me no author-

ity to ransack the family history. She had suffered greatly for many years, and was much broken in mind and spirit at the time of her death. In her will and in all the deeds to her property she mentions you, as you have noticed, by your present name; it was her wish that you should not change it. And now, as you are of age, I shall deliver my trust into your hands, firmly convinced that your own good sense and the counsel and friendship of Colonel Taine upon which you may rely, absolve me from further interference in the matter."

When or where Hope Vincent died, he would not inform her, but eluded the subject in such a way as to almost make it appear of no importance.

"Oh! dear, dear mother! could we only have known each other!" Cried Hagar, mournfully.

"Look but a little further down the vista of the Future—beyond the purposes, the joys and hopes of the material world, and there in the beautiful region which we call the spiritual, just across the airy bridge we name Death, you shall find her and know her forever."

The business portion of the Doctor's visit was finished before supper, and he decided to remain over Sunday as it was the first day he had spent away from the hospital for two years. At supper Hagar made inquiries about General Leigh, in reply to which he said:

"General Leigh has caused me much anxiety. His wounds are virtually healed, and at intervals he is well enough to be removed to his home. But his mind seems to be more affected than his body. His wife, whom we all regard rather as an angel than as a native of this earth, appears to be afflicted beyond remedy on account of some slight which his mental condition has caused him to inflict and is literally toiling herself to death in the wards. We cannot restrain her, for she will listen to neither advice nor threats, and as I am satisfied that nothing except the occupation in which she takes so much pride, prevents her from sudden and probably fatal collapse, I have not yet hit upon a way out of the difficulty. Though she has refused to enter the ward where he stays since he has been out of danger, she never misses an opportunity to enquire about him, and shows her undying tenderness and affection in many ways. What she needs is a complete change."

"Oh! how I wish she would come here," exclaimed Hagar.

"And so she shall," replied Colonel Taine. "I urged her to come when I saw her in the hospital the other day and she promised to do so on receiving your invitation."

Dr. Bruce mentioned the fact that General Leigh had been worse since the storm which caused so great damage to the hospital, but was prevented by a sign from Colonel Taine, from making any mention of the Lamont episode.

Josephine arrived at Cleveland a few days later and was met at the station by Colonel Taine, Hagar and Spencer. The latter then met Mrs. Leigh for the first time and did not drive to Chestnut Grove with them as his duties prevented. Josephine, however, liked his appearance, and congratulated Hagar upon her choice of a husband.

"If there ever was a thoroughly honest man, Spencer is one. But the best of the case is that they are both madly in love, and each thinks the other perfect," said Colonel Taine.

Though a few years Hagar's senior Josephine found her entirely congenial, and entered heartily into the discussion of her future. Colonel Taine declared that with her help he intended to arrange for the wedding immediately, and by his thorough good nature had put them in the best of spirits on the road to Chestnut Grove. On arriving at the gate, they were surprised and the horses startled at seeing a ragged and unkempt individual seated on the rustic bench just inside the fence. His stockingless feet which were tied up in the wrecks of two odd army shoes, were drawn under him on the seat, while his head, partly covered with a peakless cap that looked more gray than blue, was couched on his arms against the back of the bench, and his body inclined forward. His face was concealed by his ragged sleeves and he was evidently asleep.

"Some poor tramp or deserter," observed Colonel Taine.

The opening and shutting of gates, the rattle of the horse's iron shoes on the gravel and the sound of human voices did not disturb him in the least. The carriage was stopped, and Colonel Taine got out.

"He is evidently very tired, and no doubt hungry, so if you will drive on, I will arouse him and ask him to come to the house for some refreshment," said the Colonel. The carriage proceeded to the house, and the officer went up to the tramp and tapped him on the shoulder. This did not arouse him, and it was a moment or two before the man looked up, seeming in a kind of stupor, but evidently not under the influence of liquor. When he caught sight of his disturber he clasped his arms around some of the timbers of the bench and held fast, glancing at the Colonel with a wild and furtive look.

"I am not going to hurt you, my friend," said Colonel Taine, in a kindly voice, "I want to ask you to come in and rest yourself, and get something to eat."

The man shook his head dismally, and took a firmer grip upon the bench.

"You have been a soldier?"

The man nodded an affirmative, and with another sad motion of the head let his chin sink upon his breast.

"Well, then, tell me what you wish and I will help you for I am a soldier myself. If you belong to these parts, I can send you to your home. Come, let me lead you to the house, and when you have had some dinner you can tell me what you like of your story, and I will aid you all I can."

As the Colonel spoke, the man looked up several times and again bowed his head without making an attempt to answer. Though his features indicated that he was young, his shaggy hair and beard were streaked with gray. He appeared to be a hopeless wreck. But there was something about him which excited both the pity and interest of Col. Taine, who persisted in his effort to induce him to come to the house for food and rest.

"Where are you from?" he asked.

"From? from? Ha! You've never been there—but I see you've caught a wing shot, too—poor devil! From? Two hells,—the hell of fire, and the hell of ice! You don't know them? But say, can you tell me where I am? I've been wandering about a hundred years, looking for her, for Hagar, and I know this old bench is hers and that old gate, and look here, that's the last letter

she wrote me. And is she here now—is she here?"

As he spoke he took a small scrap of dirty paper from a pocket in his ragged blouse, and his voice was very plaintive as he looked up into the Colonel's face to ask the final question.

"Yes," the latter replied, "Hagar lives here, but what is your name?"

At this question he raised his hand to his forehead, and again shook his head absently. He tried to speak, but appeared unable to command either voice or words. Colonel Taine finally took hold of his arm and led him to the house. He endeavored in vain to eat, and though he gazed vacantly at those about him, he did not recognized even Hagar. After taking a few sips of wine he spoke several coherent words among which were "Hagar," and "this letter."

It fell out from what he said, and upon examination of the note, which Hagar recognized as one she had written to her rustic young admirer William Sanders in the autumn of '62, that this scarred and broken spectre was all that was left of that gallant recruit. Hagar was deeply affected by his condition, for with the clue she now had, she was certain that it was none other than her old friend, whose manly character and noble heart she had admired and almost loved.

What then could have happened to him?

Colonel Taine had the full reports of the Ohio Volunteers up to within a few weeks, at hand, and on referring to those relating to the regiment to which Hagar said he was assigned, found that William Sanders was reported among the missing after the second day's battle at Murfreesboro. His fate was now clear. After he was wounded he had crawled into the woods to save himself from being trampled to pieces by the rushing cavalry; had been found there after the battle and cared for by some friendly inhabitant of the country, and probably wandered away in his half-demented state as soon as he could walk. Unable to give any account of himself he had doubtless roamed about for several months, and Providence had guided his feeble steps towards home at last.

The news was broken gently to his parents who still mourned the loss of the son who was their pride, and he

was taken home to die after a few days of peace, with the kiss of his dear mother and of Hagar on his brow. The minister said that the brave spirit had remained with the shattered body just long enough to bring it home, and then sped away to that better Home where war and suffering come no more.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"This is the damning hypocrisy of the age, that it slights morality and spends its zeal in ceremony."—*Fuller.*

Mrs. Leigh's health and spirits were soon improved in the genial atmosphere of Chestnut Grove, but there was a lingering sadness in her demeanor which she could not dispel. James explained to Hagar that it was probably due to Josephine's grief on account of her husband's wrecked condition, but added that he was certain some cause of estrangement existed between them—something more subtle in its effects than any physical injury. In speaking of the matter to Hagar, he said:—

"Without having the remotest idea of what this trouble is, I have determined to make an effort to bring about a reconciliation. Dr. Bruce thinks that, if they could meet alone under favorable conditions, all would be set right, and it has occurred to me that the occasion of your wedding will afford just the opportunity we want. I will arrange the details, and you must help me to carry them out."

Nearly every day Josephine received a note from Dr. Bruce, who was in Colonel Taine's confidence, respecting her husband's health and the general news of the hospital, in which her patient devotion had been a feature for many months. In his latest letter the Doctor wrote:

"General Leigh seems much happier of late, and is also in better health. But he still refuses to leave the hospital except with a certificate that he is fit for service. This, of course is out of the question, for as a matter of fact, he will never again be fit for active service. He seems to suspect that you have left the hospital, and said to me yesterday: 'I have treated my wife with great indignity since I came here, and I want to see her to ask her forgiveness.' I put him off by saying that you were away for a rest but would soon be back. Mrs. Lamont has returned, broken-hearted to

New Orleans, still struggling against doubts that only her own goodness prevented her from perceiving in their true bearings, and in spite of all her sufferings, believing still that the husband who so cruelly blighted her life, was innocent."

Hagar's daily letter to Spencer kept him informed of all that was transpiring at Chestnut Grove, and when, on Saturday night he came there to stay over Sunday, it did not take them long to determine that there was no good reason why their marriage should be further delayed.

"I'm afraid you will find me a dull old fellow for a husband, darling Hagar," said Spencer, after the wedding day had been fixed. "But if you can reconcile yourself to live in the same house with one whose faults you have had no opportunity to discover, my undying love and a constant purpose of amendment may help to atone for my shortcomings. As I grow older, the missionary spirit which was strong within me when we first met, seems to take a firmer hold upon my mind and heart; but it is broader now than the pinched horizon of a creed, and I feel that I am not fixed in a groove as I was before. As I look back, I realize that a kind of canker possessed me, body and soul, and it seems that the Worker of Miracles had found me battling with a devil and mercifully cast it out. My spirit is resolute, and free and kindly towards all men as it never was before; the bitterness of a narrow bigotry has ceased to control my heart—I am literally the 'deformed transformed.' And all this I owe to you my darling, my wife!"

"What, then, do I not owe to you, love, and what do we both not owe to heaven? In my sight you can never have a fault. We may be called upon to suffer or to mourn together, but I conceive you perfect. To be convinced that you were not would be worse than death, and death would come sooner than that conviction. For you are brave, and generous, and good. You think of others rather than yourself, and make your spirit master of what's beneath it. I shall learn from you, love, how to think; and you may learn from me, how to love."

"I think I might pass a fair examination in that sweet study already. But, do you know, dearest, that I almost regret your fortune came to prevent the ideal bliss I

had imagined for us in a tiny cottage far removed from the notice of the world. I pictured myself struggling cheerfully to pay the rent and provide such humble fare as poverty can afford; while I saw you the busy housewife, my sweeter self, happy and bright through adversity, making the poor man's cottage sunnier than any palace. But what will be our course under the new conditions?"

"First of all, let us travel. That experience will give a still wider range to your 'missionary spirit,' and on our return we can have the ideal cottage of your dream. But, tell me, love, do you ever regret having separated yourself from the Mormon Zion? There always seems to be a sad note in your voice when you recur to your people."

"I regret the people but not the cause."

"And, while I think of it, what religion shall we profess now?"

"Let us profess the religion of action rather than that of creed. Let us endeavor to be and do, rather than to seem or pretend. Like other men, I can readily conjure up an impossible ideal, but the possible extends as far as man need want to go. While much of the so called moral teaching and religious doctrine of the past is doubtful both as to authority and utility, the two simple commands of the Saviour which may be understood by a child, bear the impress of perfect Truth, and I sincerely believe are within the bounds of the possible.

"Love one another."

"Do unto others as you would that they should do to you."

"These apply to both needs and the natures of men in their best state. We feel that we require justice from others, and we therefore accord it gladly. Realized, these commands solve all human difficulties. They change chaos into concord by the magic of their touch; they set straight all the crooked ways of thought and action which now keep men floundering in despair. They signify the only remedy for evils which now pervade every human institution and every phase of human life. To obey them 'in spirit and in truth,' is

to disarm the oppressor, to check, and finally to abolish evil-doing and evil-thinking, too; and to adjust all the varied and complicated relations of life upon principles as harmonious as Nature herself; for, to be fair, just, honest, truthful, virtuous and conscientious, in all our conduct and dealings with our fellow-beings, would be the inevitable result of strict obedience to these two Divine commands."

"Why, then, are they not obeyed? Is it one of the conditions of existence here that we must continue in a state of misery and imperfection?"

"It may be, but I prefer to think that the methods which are, and have been, employed ostensibly for the purpose of giving them effect, were not of a character to attain that end, and that men for ages have pursued a shadow at the cost of the substance. There may be better methods still available. It appears to me, moreover, that the question of maintaining life has a powerful bearing here. While men are struggling desperately for existence they will not, they cannot, receive much benefit from merely ethical teaching. The acceptation and practice of these beneficent doctrines cannot be confined to a class or race, they must be universal; and universal man in the present state of the world, whatever his origin may have been, is much more animal than spirit."

"But is there not much honest effort being made in the direction of a higher and better plane? May not your highest ideal sometime be realized?"

"In the remotest future, yes. But in our own day men lack sympathy. They cannot 'love one another,' because they think and care only for themselves. The advance of science has far outstripped that of morals. Men hate and fear each other because most of their callings hinge on trickery. The practice of reprisal, which in the Middle ages was carried on by direct open attack, is perpetuated in modern cunning, and the 'Robber Baron' of to-day is he who has driven less lucky tricksters to the wall by his superior talents as a gambler. Only a revolution of the most astonishing kind can bring men to their senses."

"A revolution! Do you mean a war?"

"It might be done without war if men would pause to think; but history seems to show that the only lessons that have a lasting effect on the world are written in blood. But the mandate has gone forth, and a greater multitude of the people than most men dream of, are already convinced that it must be obeyed. Those who hinder will be left behind, and those who oppose will be trampled under foot. The awful problem can only be solved by the power of the Infinite working here through good men. It seems like a maze impossible to thread! Is the solution to be found in some natural fact like steam or electricity, and to be brought home to the race as palpably as these? The thing is there like lightning in the clouds, but where is the Franklin to capture it on his kite's tail and demonstrate it to humanity!"

"Perhaps that honor may be reserved for you."

Spencer spoke with the rapt interest and enthusiasm that can only emanate from a true and ardent soul. They were sitting on the verandah in the shadow of the creeper that hung in graceful clusters, and the moon beams as they fell through the lattice were dancing in kaleidoscopic figures about them. Hagar had nestled her head against her lover's breast as she made the last remark, and Spencer was about to reply, when they heard a footstep on the porch. Looking round they saw the dark outline of a woman's figure standing a short distance from them. Her hat and costume showed them at once that she was a stranger, but her face was in shadow.

Spencer rose, and taking a step toward her, said:

"May I ask whom we have the pleasure of——"

"You do not know me," interrupted the figure. "I have come here with a message for the daughter of Hope Vincent—is she here?"

"A message from my mother!" exclaimed Hagar, seizing Spencer's arm. "Will you come in?"

"No—I take it you are Hagar, and if so, can deliver my message here."

"I am."

She had scarcely uttered the words when two pistol shots in quick succession flashed in her face, and she sank to the floor uttering a faint moan.

The woman vanished as stealthily as she had come, and the panic caused by the alarm of fire-arms completely unnerved everybody about the place. James was absent, and Josephine was frantic when she rushed down stairs and met Spencer carrying Hagar into the sitting-room.

The poor fellow was dumb with agony beyond the power of words, beyond the range of thought. His darling one had fallen mortally hurt in his very arms, and he could not save her. By the lurid glare of the deadly weapon that had torn her from him, he saw and knew the face of her murderer.

"It is possible that her life may yet be saved. Hurry, Dan, get a horse and go for a doctor, quick, quick," gasped poor Spencer.

Despite his deadly fear, Dan lost no time in making his way to the nearest country doctor's, but long before the doctor came, Hagar was no more.

After quarter of a century the gloom of that dread night still casts its shadows over the minds of those who knew and loved the victim. James Taine, the honored veteran has spent his lonely life in chosen seclusion at the old home, and has tried in vain through all these years to account for the mystery of Hagar's death. Spencer never told him nor anybody what he knew about it; but, only the other day in writing from the slums of New York, where he has spent his life and Hagar's fortune, in trying to help the wretched, he said:

"To-day I met with a most singular experience. A denizen of one of the most squalid tenements of Catherine Street came and told me that a woman was sick in a garret where starvation threatened her and another woman with three children who were her fellow lodgers. The sick woman, my informant said, had lived for sometime by fishing scraps from garbage barrels along the curb-stones of the quarter, was old and bent, and given to the use of grog. When I reached the noisome garret where she lay, it was plain that neither grog nor any other stimulant, solid or liquid, had played any part there for many hours. I sent for food and fuel and paused to make enquiries for future

guidance, when to my horror I discovered that the woman was none other than the Belle Ross of whose visits Dr. Bruce told us before that fatal night. I had met her during my memorable stay at Cincinnati in '62, and the next time I saw her face was by a pistol flash. Oh, James! I cannot tell you the anguish this cruel tearing open of a mortal wound has caused me! I taxed the loathsome creature with her crime and she confessed in full, saying that she was thirsting for revenge from the moment she knew the disposition Hope Vincent made of her property. A lover deserted her on account of her failure to secure the fortune—a lover for whom she would willingly have died, and for whose support she had systematically robbed her mistress for months. This, she said, completely unbalanced her mind, and without caring what might be the result, she vowed to do the awful deed! —— She begged me not to give her over to the law, but to have pity, and supply her with drink enough to drown remembrance..... Little can be done for the poor wretch, but I shall help her as best I can to prepare for the end, which is near at hand."

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